

Rev. D.^r Barth

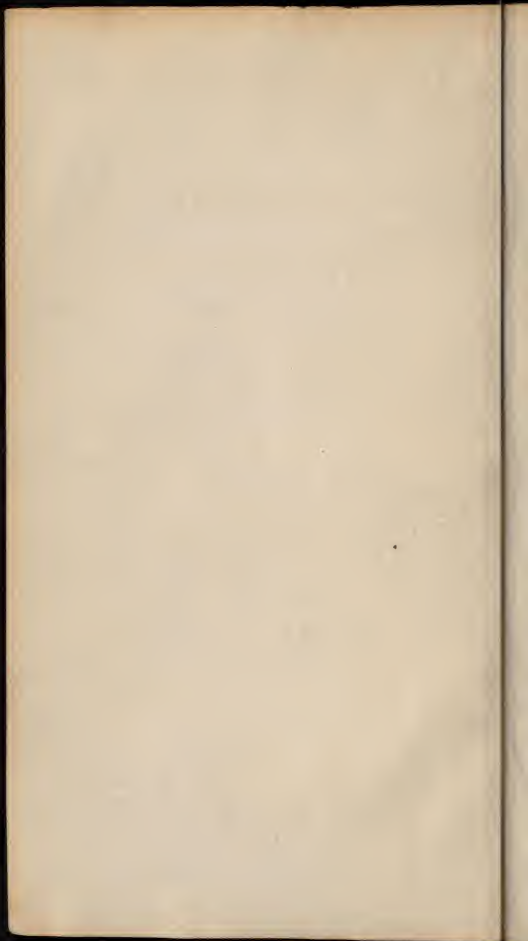
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VEDANTISM, BRAHMISM,

AND

CHRISTIANITY

EXAMINED AND COMPARED.

A PRIZE ESSAY.

BY THE

REV. JOSEPH MULLENS,

MISSIONARY OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN September, 1849, the Committee of the Calcutta Christian Tract and Book Society issued the following notice :

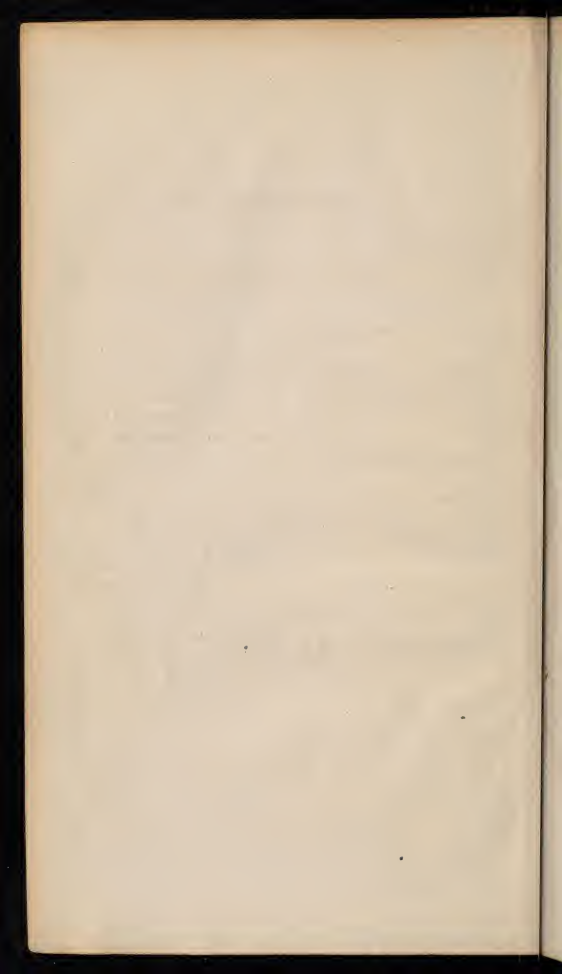
“ It is proposed to award a Prize of *Three Hundred Rupees* to the best Essay, either in English or Bengali, on *Vedantism*, or the systems included under that name.

“ The Essayist will be required to give an account of the Origin and Antiquity of Vedántism, and of its true characters and dogmas, illustrated by copious quotations from Vyása and his followers ; and to discuss in like manner the question whether any such system is really to be found in the Vedas.

“ He will then examine whether the modern system so called, as taught in the Brámha Sabhá, be identical with the Vedánta of Vyása ; and if not, what its peculiar doctrines are, and on what foundation they rest.

“ Finally, the Essayist will be required to point out the insuperable difficulties which lie in the way of receiving either of these systems as a revelation from God ; and to contrast them with Christianity, as adapted to be the religion of mankind.”

The present Essay was among others written in reply to this notice, and to it the prize was awarded.



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VEDANTISM, BRAHMISM, AND CHRISTIANITY.

INTRODUCTION.

DURING the past few years, the spread of English Education, of European Science, and of moral and religious truth, in Bengal, has produced a most powerful impression upon native society. Great numbers of young men, especially in Calcutta and its neighbourhood, have given up a blind and bigoted attachment to the idolatrous system long honoured by their forefathers; and have exhibited an anxiety to seek a better and purer faith. With their enlarged views of scientific and moral truth, with a finer standard of judgment than that possessed by their untaught countrymen, in all that concerns their best interests, it was impossible that they should continue to receive, in silence and respect, the legends which their ancestors devoured without question. Looking at Puranic Hinduism any way, they can see only foolish theories, abominable gods, sensual worship and degrading dogmas, leaving fearful traces of evil in the character and practice of their unthinking worshippers. While believing that in *the creation* of the Universe is seen the most glorious proof of the power and wisdom of God, they learn from the description of it in the Shastras, the most humiliating evidences of his indecision, imbecility and folly. While believing that God is *one*, they find two rival deities claiming their regard, and sometimes quarrelling with each other. While believing that God is *all-wise*, they find that Brahmá knew

not the constitution of the world that he had formed; and Vishnu could not reproduce the universe without the Vedas. Rám was not aware of the capture of Sita; nor did Káli know that she was dancing on her lord. God is *all-powerful*. But Brahmá wept because he could not create: Vishnu could not conquer Rában without Hanuman; nor save himself from the curse of Bhrigu. Krishna could not get king Daṇḍa's mare even by stealing, nor conquer the Kurus without a lie. Siva could not save his ling, nor preserve from destruction the head of his son: nor could Surya provide himself with a new set of teeth. Men must believe that God is *true*. But Brahmá was cursed for lying: Vishnu became incarnate to deceive king Bali: Rám lied to Rában; and Yudhisthir lied at the suggestion of Krishna. If God is *pure*, how can the superior gods of Hinduism claim that character; when according to the Shastras, they were guilty of adultery, harlotry, incest and drunkenness. Brahmá wished to violate his daughter: Vishnu seduced Jalandhar's wife: Mahádev was openly profligate: Indra deceived the wife of Goutam: Rám was put out of caste for killing Bráhmans: and Krishna's adulteries and murders are known to the wide world.

While standing aghast at the character of these gods, they cannot think well of the *mode* of their worship. Base, brutish idolatry; the adoration of mud and wooden images, are enjoined by the Shastras, and practised to such an extent as to make the Hindus the most idolatrous people on the face of the earth. The Charak Pujá cannot teach them kindness; nor the Rás, moral purity. The Snán Játtra will not impress them with a conviction of God's holiness; nor the songs of the Rath Játtra elevate it in their esteem. A wise man must feel that the endless ceremonies enjoined by the Puráns contain no *true way of salvation*. They see that thousands who daily bathe in the purifying Ganges are among the vilest people of the country; and that long pilgrimages to see a wooden Jagannáth lead only to immorality, disease

and death. They cannot see any virtue in the name of Hari to purify the heart and pardon sin: nor discern the justice of God in the fact that, when the wicked Ajánil on his death-bed accidentally called his son Náráyan, he was reckoned as having appealed to Vishnu, and was therefore saved from the vengeance of Yam. The rite of Sati, they know, was encouraged and fostered by this system; and the cruel exposure of the sick at the Ganges' side is so encouraged to the present day.

Compelled to abjure the system both for its objects and mode of worship; for its cruel dogmas and unsatisfying rites, their condemnation of it is confirmed by surveying its constant *fruits*. They see every where religious error, gross darkness and grievous superstition. The gods are feared, never loved. The scream of the owl, the chirp of the lizard, the sight of an empty pitcher, the sound of the word 'Kachchhap,' are believed to determine the fortunes of men for good or evil. The most grovelling notions prevail concerning the nature and character of the supreme; the most grovelling notions of moral duty and religious obligation. They see the worst vices extensively prevalent, yet fostered by the religion which all believe. Men and women are made the slaves of a lordly priesthood; while the whole female population are consigned to the depths of ignorance and degradation.

When they see all this, they cannot but feel ashamed and disgusted with the faith of their fathers, and desire, in any legitimate way to provide themselves with a better. In this they feel rightly. True religion is an all-important blessing; the salvation of the immortal soul is an all-absorbing care. But many have forsaken the old belief, only to adopt another system which has errors of its own. Avoiding the rocks of Scylla they dash upon Charybdis; and cannot escape the dreadful ruin which falls upon all, who die unreconciled to an offended God. Such an error some of their best friends have seen with great regret; and with a view to open their

eyes to the true character of their position, they have suggested the present enquiry into the Vedantic and Christian systems, which now above all others claim their homage. To this enquiry they request their candid and prayerful attention. For their good alone it is intended : may that good be its result !

Among those who, in modern days, were the first to throw aside the Puranic system as an abominable error, stood foremost the RAJÁ RÁMMOHAN ROY. He was learned in the Shastras beyond many Pandits of his time, and gave especial attention to the study of the Vedas. There he found the doctrine of one God, 'the God of the whole world,' and believing that that was the basis and sum of true religion, he desired that his countrymen should embrace it. Unlike the apathetic many of this land, he felt a love for his degraded countrymen, and having, as he believed, found the true light, he determined to make efforts to communicate that light to others. "He appeared among his countrymen as a champa-tree in a wood of thorns." At a great expense of money and trouble, he collected certain of the Upanishads, translated them into Bengali and, with other works, caused them to be circulated. Though much opposed by his family and friends, and suffering much from obloquy (as all reformers do), he steadily persevered in his efforts. With a view to give a public expression of his opinions, in January, 1830, (or according to the Bengali Sakábda, 11th Magh, 1751,) he and his friends established the Brahma Sabhá ; that is, a regular meeting, after the model of Christian meetings, in which the Upanishads should be read and explained, and the worship of BRAHMA celebrated with hymns and prayers. The anniversary of this day is still observed with ceremony among his followers. After his departure to Europe, the Sabhá gradually lost its members ; it fell to the ground, and nothing was heard of its objects for a period of six years. The conviction, however, that the gross idolatry of Puranic Hinduism cannot be sustained, continued to gain strength ; and in 1839

another attempt was made to revive the opinions and embody the purpose of Rámmohan Roy.

On the sixth of October (Aswin 21st, 1761), the Pandit Rám Chandra with his scholars and friends, ten in number, met in the house of Bábu Dwárákánáth Thákur, established the present TATTWABODHINI SABHÁ, and determined, by actively advocating their views, to endeavour to gain converts to their faith. In 1840, the Katha Upanishad was published and a school established. The members slowly increased in number: being 112 in 1841, but falling of to 83 the following year. In 1843, a kind friend presented the Sabhá with a press and fount of types, and from that time it increased in importance. Larger meetings began to be held: new members enrolled their names; a spirit of activity was infused into the leaders; and strong efforts were made to spread far and wide the doctrines which they had embraced. The time was most favourable for such an advance. English education had produced in the minds of *hundreds*, the very conviction from which the Sabhá started; namely, the falsity of Puranism; a conviction which in the days of Rámmohan Roy had been shared by comparatively few.

The special *aim* of the Tattwabodhini Society, as recorded in its own papers, is to "make known the Religion of Brahma;" to induce men to believe that religion, and practise what they believe. This end it seeks in no narrow sphere. It desires that the light of wisdom "should brighten the whole of India; that each man of the 140 millions living between the Himálaya and Cape Comorin should become a member of the society: and that hence the Hindu race should enjoy the respect and honour, which were shown to their great ancestors, in the days when Hindustan was the chief seat of learning and religion."

For the accomplishment of this end, it purposes to employ special means, described in its Reports. 1. The religion of Brahma must be drawn out from the Shastras. 2. The wisdom and power of God must be demonstrated from his

works. 3. The rules by which men may be guided to a religious practice, must also be laid down. Under the *first* of these, is to be determined what the original Shástra is; what rules it prescribes for sacrifices, ceremonies, conduct, and worship; and by what changes the modern system, contained in the Tantras, Puráns, Six Darsans and Smritis, came to arise. To discover these important facts, a complete collection must be made of the four Vedas, all the Smritis, the Six Darsans, all the Puráns and all the Tantras: and pandits and scholars must be appointed to read, translate, examine and describe them. The *second* item in the plan also requires much labour. For a complete illustration of the wisdom, power and goodness of the Creator in his works, treatises on Physiology, Mental Science, Astronomy, Natural History, Chemistry and the like, must be written in the native tongue; and that boys may study them, the whole country must be filled with schools. To accomplish the *third* plan, that of inducing men to win the favour of God by doing works approved by him, a complete system of morals must be published.

In a review of this great object to be composed by such gigantic means, the society might well confess; (Report for 1847) that "its labours are mountains, its duties wide as the sea;" and its prospect of success a distant one. But this did not deter the members from attempts to achieve it. With the *press* they felt they had an important agent at their command, and accordingly established the TATTWABODHINI PATRIKÁ. This periodical has been considered from the first their *múl-yantra* or chief engine of action. It has now been established eight years, and has circulated considerable information concerning the Shástras. It has published large portions of the Sanhitás of the Rig Veda; several of the Vedantic Upanishads, with Sanskrit commentaries and an English translation: discourses delivered at the Brahma Sabbhá; treatises by Rámmohan Roy on the subject of their faith; discourses on Natural Theology; Moral Proverbs: Essays on the Vedas

and some of the Puráns; accounts of Hindu Sects; a Bengali translation (in part) of the Mahábhárat; reports of the Society; defences against attacks: and so on. The Patriká has been given *gratis* to all the members of the Society, and circulated in Calcutta, Krishnaghur, Sukságar, Burdwan, Hughly, Dacca, and Benares. Several of its papers have been reprinted in a separate form: and other valuable works have been issued from its press; among them the *Katha*, *Mundaka*, and five other Vedantic Upanishads, the *Vedánta Sár*, the *Bráhma Dharma* and the *Panchadosi*, a treatise by Sankar-Áchárjya.

As a further means of securing their proposed end, four young men were despatched as students to Benares, with a view to purchase, or if necessary, copy out a complete collection of the Vedas and other Shástras; and also to study them under the most experienced pandits. One of them in the course of two years made considerable progress, and on his return to Calcutta became assistant-Secretary to the Society and one of the Áchárjyas of the Brahma Sabhá. The others, after making some advance, were compelled to return to Calcutta before their studies were finished.

A considerable library has been collected, partly in Benares, partly in Calcutta: including the Vedas, Vedángas, Darsans and various Puráns, with commentaries, treatises, &c. in Sanskrit. Other works are in Bengali and English: the library contains more than thirteen hundred volumes, great and small.

The Society likewise began to establish *Schools*, in which Vedantic writings should form an important part of the class-books, and their doctrines hold an equally important place in the daily instructions. The first school was established in Calcutta, but was soon closed, the youths of this city being more anxious to learn English than study the Vedas. A mofussil school was determined on, and opened at Bánsbáriyá near Hughly, in May, 1843. This school also was closed after three years for want of funds, and the land and school-

house were sold to the Free Church Mission. No similar effort has since been made. Again, the Society has from the first endeavoured to consolidate itself, and cultivate devout feelings amongst its members, by the celebration of regular *worship*. For this purpose the followers of this doctrine, whether members of the Tattwabodhini Society or not, meet on Wednesday evenings as a *Brahma Samáj*, "an assembly of the worshippers of Brahma," at the premises of the Society in Chitpore Road. Their long hall has been neatly fitted with pews, rising backward from the centre to the two ends, and well lighted by chandeliers and wall-shades. In the middle of the hall upon a dais of grained marble, sit the two pandits, the leaders in the worship: and in a recess immediately opposite to them are the musicians. The service commences with the reading of various passages from the Vedas. The *Gáyatri* is recited and meditated on. A hymn from one of the Upanishads is then chanted by all present. An exposition of texts from the Vedas, or an Essay on some branch of Natural Theology, follows; and is succeeded by a short discourse by some member of the Sabhá, frequently by its President. The service closes with the singing of Brahmic hymns by the professional musicians, who accompany it with their instruments. The whole occupies about an hour.

The impulse given to the Society in 1843 continued to increase its numbers and power for nearly five years. The meetings for worship were regularly held, and were numerously attended. Their present house was (we believe) purchased; and several branch societies were established; of which the most flourishing were at Krishnaghur, Sukságar, and Dacca. But in 1847, the Society reached its zenith and since then its numbers, and especially its income have steadily declined. The Reports ascribe its first decrease to the commercial distress of 1847: the revolutions of Europe also, according to the same authority, were not without their influence. The last two Reports contain no mention of the branch societies: they show that the number of members has

considerably decreased; that the monthly subscriptions have fallen lower than in the nine years previous; that the expenditure has, in consequence, been greatly reduced; and that the Press has saved the Society from debt by the profits of its job-printing. The following table, drawn up from the Society's own publications, contains evidence of these facts. Whether the decrease will be a permanent one remains to be seen.

Report of the year.	Members.	Income } including }		Monthly Subscriptions.	Expendi- ture.
1762 i. e. to April, 1841	105	1538	5 5	1077 0 0	1487 0 10
1763 " 1842	112	2476	12 10	2389 7 10	2304 15 5
1764 " 1843	83	3476	9 0	2892 15 0	2896 15 15
1765 " 1844	138	4416	7 10	3388 5 0	4682 13 0
1767 " 1846	500	unknown.		4000 0 0	unknown.
1768 " 1847	573	6727	7 0	4850 7 10	6045 0 0
1769 " 1848	574	*6113	4 5	4450 4 10	*6361 8 10
1770 " 1849	505	3116	1 10	2386 0 0	3720 0 0
1771 " 1850	481	3031	13 0	2086 0 0	3301 6 0
1772 " 1851	488	3155	0 10	2066 14 5	3124 9 10

An attentive examination of these Reports develops a significant fact which does not appear upon their surface. In April, 1847, the Society contained five hundred and seventy-three members, of whom only two hundred and sixty-seven remained members in April, 1850; so that *out of the five hundred and seventy-three, more than three hundred had left the Society within three years.* May not this decrease arise from the fact that much of the power of the Society and of its apparent increase of numbers arises from what it *repudiates*, not what it teaches. There are hundreds of young men in Calcutta who cannot be Puranists; they do not however wish to shake off all the restraints and forms of religion, nor do they wish to break their caste by professing themselves Christians; they therefore enter the Tattwabodhini Society as a convenient resting-place. But the repeti-

* This is the ordinary income and expenditure. An extraordinary sum of Rs. 3,425 was also paid for the building of the third story of the house: but was given by Bábu Debendranáth Thákur.

tion of the same Srutis, of the same addresses on the works of creation, of the same moral precepts, *without an all-powerful motive to enforce them*, soon wearies them and compels them to leave. If however this notion be incorrect, and their members continue to be worshippers in the Brahma Samáj though they resign their places in the Tattwabodhini Society; it at least shows that they do not care much for their religion, since they are unwilling to pay three rupees a year for its extension or for the reading of its periodical.

Such is the early history of that Society which hopes "to cut the net," which Christians are said to be weaving for the people of India. Pleasant it may be to see so many educated young men, meet together regularly for a calm and simple worship; and to find them putting forth efforts to promote (as they think) the welfare of their countrymen. But if that system which leads them to do so be a system of error, those efforts can only add to existing evils, while the precious life of those who follow it will be spent upon seeking a soul-destroying bubble. To shew that that system *is* erroneous in its basis, its superstructure, its end:—and to point out a divine system as satisfying and as purifying as it is wise, is the object of this little work.

In carrying out this object we shall endeavour—

FIRST: To state the opinions and doctrines of the VEDANTIC SCHOOLS.

SECONDLY: To show that they are NOT REVELATIONS of religious truth: and

THIRDLY: That CHRISTIANITY possesses CLAIMS to be so considered, and is in every way superior to these systems, in its origin, its doctrines, and its fruits.

PART I.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE VEDANTIC SCHOOLS.

The Vedantic system has not always been the same. Like other systems both of ancient and modern Philosophy, it exhibits a variety of stages. All the great features of the system existed in the time and works of Vyás : in later days arose different '*Schools*,' produced by varied interpretations of his language on obscure points ; or by the natural endeavour of their leaders to account for certain dogmas and to ward off their legitimate consequences. The germs of the system and its chief doctrines are to be found in the VEDAS themselves, though not taught with that fulness and elaboration, which we find in other and later works. The system recently introduced into Calcutta by the TATTWABODHINI SOCIETY is not strictly speaking the Vedánt, though on some points closely connected with it. Each of these varieties we shall examine in its turn.

CHAPTER I.

THE VEDÁNT OF VYÁS AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

The unanimous voice of Hindu antiquity points out the great sage BĀDĀRĀYAN, otherwise called VEDA-VYÁS, as the first writer upon the Vedántic system. None of the Hindu Sages rank higher in learning, and yet very little is known of his life and history. The manner of his birth is related in his own work, the Mahábhárat.* It is said that Parásar a bráhmaṇ, the grandson of Vashishtha, passing along the banks of the Yamuná, saw a fisherman's daughter, with whose beauty he was much struck. He accordingly attempted to seduce her and succeeded, having produced an island in the

* Mahábhárat : Adi Parba.

river and covered it with a mist, in order to prevent a discovery. The injured maiden gave birth to a son, who from being born on the island and from having a dark complexion was called Krishna Dwaipáyan, "the dark islander." From the time of his birth he left his mother and became an ascetic in the woods. All his time was spent in the practice of religious austerities (tapa) and the study of religious subjects. With the affairs of common life he busied himself but little. Sometimes he was present at a celebrated sacrifice, or endeavoured to advise his relatives in their quarrels. But he quitted his retirement on one occasion for a very special object, which deserves mention. His mother, through the blessing of Parásar, had become the wife of Sántanu, the celebrated king of Hastinápur, and by him had borne two sons. Of these the elder died young: the other, Rájá Vichitrabírya married Ambá and Ambáliká, two daughters of the king of Kási, but died without issue. Most anxious to save the celebrated race of Kuru from extinction, the royal mother Satyabati, re-called her son Vyása from his studies and with many tears besought him to save the race, by raising up issue from his brother's widows. He did so. From Ambá was born Dhrita-ráshtra; and from Ambáliká, Pándu. From the former of these sprung a hundred sons: from the latter came Judhisthir, Bhím and Árjun. Thus the three great heroes of the Mahábhárat were Vyás's own grandsons.

The age in which these events occurred was not the first in which Vyás had appeared. We are informed by his great Commentator that he had formerly been born as a bráhman, named Apantara Tama: and having by his faithful performance of the requisite ceremonies attained perfect 'wisdom,' he became entitled to complete beatitude, absorption into Brahma. His later birth was not occasioned by any error on his part, but arose out of the special commission he had received to compile the Vedás. This story is consistent with another in the Vishnu Purán, that Vyás is Náráyan himself.

By the force of his austerities (yóg-bole) Vyása attained astounding wisdom, and prepared within his mind an immense Encyclopædia of Hindu learning. It is said* that as he was thinking how to obtain a worthy scholar to write it down, Brahmá himself appeared, praised his acquisitions and advised Ganesh to be sent for. The god of wisdom himself became his Secretary and, among other productions, forth came the Mahábhárat. But the greatest work attributed to him is the compilation and division of the Vedas, from whence he has attained the name of VEDA-VYÁSA "divider of the Veda." The Vedas or their doctrines seem to have existed before his time as ancient traditions, even bearing to some extent their present names; but he was the first to arrange in a systematic form the heterogeneous mass of hymns and prayers, ceremonial rules, doctrines and fables of which they were composed. In this task he was assisted by various co-adjutors "well read in those works." Paila aided him to form the Rig Veda; Vaisampáyan to arrange the Yajur; Jaimini the Sám Veda; and Sumanta the Atharbba. These learned pandits were members of the school which Vyása seems to have formed for the study of religious questions. "This original tree of the Vedas, having been divided by him into four principle stems, soon branched out into an extensive forest." Besides this important compilation, Vyás wrote a treatise on the theology of the Vedas, in which he reduced to system the various doctrines they contain. This work is variously called the *Uttar Mimánsá*, the *Sáririk Sûtras* and the *Brahma Sûtras*, &c. He is said also to have written the Puráns. His works thus constitute an immense body of Hindu learning.

The age in which he lived, in which the Vedas took a definite shape and the Vedánta was reduced to system, cannot be exactly determined. The language, the grammatical forms and the style of the Vedas prove that they are undoubtedly most ancient, but the works contain no system of chronology which will infallibly connect them with contemporaneous

* Mahábhárat: Adi Parba. Tattw. Patrika, No. 67, p. 192.

events in other well-known countries. We are able however to determine their date with some approximation to truth, from two independent sources which give a somewhat similar result. In the Vishnu and other Puráns we have lists of the Hindu kings of various dynasties, who reigned over the districts of Hindustan in ancient times. Two of these, the families of Ikshaku and the kings of Magadha, agree together very well, and incidental notices occur which show them to have a foundation in fact. In the latter list occurs the name of king Nanda who was to exterminate the Khetriyas "and bring all the earth under one umbrella." Now king Nanda immediately preceded CHANDRAGUPTA, whose reign, we know, began 315 B. C. : and thus we find a basis on which Hindu chronology may be built. From Parikshit, the grandson of Arjun (with whom the Kali Yug began) to Nanda, the sum of individual reigns makes up 1500 years ; but the sum total of the same period is stated in the Vishnu Purán at 1015, and in the Matsya and Váyú Puráns at 1050 years.* During this time there were (according to the best accounts) forty-seven kings, who therefore reigned on an average *twenty-two* years each, the average of the reigns of the Jewish kings who were their contemporaries. The above period of 1050 years, added to the reign of Nanda and his sons (about forty years according to Col. Wilford), and to the date when Chandragupta mounted the throne, will give the date B. C. 1405, as that of the birth of Parikshit and conclusion of the Great War. The Vishnu Purán gives B. C. 1370 for the same date. As however there is some confusion in the earliest reigns, the best authorities, (Wilson, Colebrooke, and others) agree in considering the total as somewhat too large, and estimate the real date a little later.† These calculations are strangely confirmed by the Calendar attached to the Vedas, and made in the time of Parásar, the father of Vyás. The position of the Colures at the time the table was made, is mentioned in

* Vishnu Puran. pp. 484, 5.

† As. Res. IX. 87, 116.

it, and from the astronomical data given, it has been calculated by Mr. Davis that the table must be dated B. C. 1391.* From these considerations it appears that the great war, described in the Mahábhárat, the leaders in which were Vyás's grandsons, took place in the middle of the FOURTEENTH CENTURY. The compilation of the Vedas by Vyás, and the formation of the Vedántic system by him immediately preceded it. At that period the Israelites had conquered Canaan, relapsed into idolatry and were in subjection to the kings of Moab and Hazor, to be delivered from the latter by Deborah and Barak. One hundred years after, the victories of Ninus consolidated the Assyrian Empire and led to the foundation of its wondrous palaces. Before two hundred years had past, came the war of Thebes, the Trojan war, and the founding of the city of Tyre. Thus the civilization and learning of Hindustan long preceded that of western Asia and of Europe. They were preceded only by those of Egypt; and no written works are known older than those of Vyás, except the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua.

The Vedánt is the last of the six 'Darsans' or systems of Hindu Philosophy. This is proved from the fact that in it the authors and opinions of the other schools are often referred to chiefly for the sake of being controverted; and even the doctrines of the Buddhists and Jains are objected to and refuted. The Vedánt does not stand perfectly alone. It adopts the modes of argument employed by the Nyáy Darsan, and is still more closely connected with that of the *Purbba Mimánsá* attributed to Jaymani. The systems indeed as their names imply, form parts of one whole; the *Purbba Mimánsá* dealing with the ritual ceremonies of the Vedas, the *Uttar Mimánsá* or *Vedánta*, with its doctrinal theology.

The AUTHORITIES from which the Vedántic system must be learned, authorities which enjoy the reputation of a divine origin are, besides the Vedas, the *Brahma Sûtras* and the

* As. Res. IX. 87. Mr. Bentley reckons the same 1153 B. C. VIII. 233.

Bhagabat Gítá, both which are the work of Veda Vyása. The *Dharma Shástra* of Manu is also reckoned such.

The *Bhagabat Gítá* forms part of the *Bhísma Parbba*, the Sixth book of the Mahábhárat. It is divided into *eighteen* Sections, and professes to describe a conversation between Krishna and Arjun immediately preceding the battle of Kurú-khyetra. Arjun was in deep grief at the slaughter which had taken place; and because the warriors on both sides were sprung from one family. Krishna in order to remove his grief teaches him, that from the nature of things, it was useless to mourn or to rejoice; and enters into the whole Vedánt doctrine to defend his position. The dialogue is related by Sanjay, the charioteer, to the blind Dhritaráshttra, who had enquired from him the news of the battle. Krishna declares himself to be the author of its doctrines: and as a proof exhibits himself to Arjun in his divine form.

Some critics doubt whether the Mahábhárat is the work of Vyása. It is *possible* that the present work is not his, and was written on a basis which he originally composed. But however that be, the work itself declares again and again that Vyás *is* the author; and Hindu scholars universally receive it as a divine composition from his pen.

The *Sárírik Sútras* are aphorisms, 555 in number, stating in a few words the principles of the system. They are divided into four Books (*adhyáy*) each of which has four Chapters (*pada*); these again are divided into Sections (*adhi-karana*) according to the subject. The number of Sections is 191. Each Section should, (if perfect) contain five parts: the *subject* to be treated of;—the *doubt* respecting it; the *plausible solution* of that doubt; the *real solution*; the *relation* of the subject to other works. The five are however not often found complete. Frequently the real solution only is given and a plausible one not hinted at. At other times the latter is examined with all its arguments and attempts are made to refute them. The *Sútras*, unhappily, treat their subjects so concisely, that it is most difficult to understand

them. The obscurity is increased by the old forms of language in which they are written. Like the 'paragraphs' of a 'text-book' they just state a principle or argument and leave it. Hence from the first, commentaries have been necessary for their explanation, and doubtless the original commentator was the author himself, when he delivered the Sūtras to his scholars. The greatest of all the numerous commentators on the Sutrās of Vyās is SANKAR ĀCHĀRJYA. This learned Hindu bears a name second to none in the range of Indian philosophy, except that of Vyāsa himself. He is the most illustrious disciple of the Vedānt, and did much by his lectures, discussions and writings to increase the number of its followers. Of his parentage we know nothing. He is said to have been an incarnation of Siva; to have been born at Srīngagiri, where he founded a celebrated school, and to have died at Kancha. He appears to have travelled much and to have lived to a great age; he is known even more in South India than in Bengal. The age in which he lived can be pretty well determined from the following considerations, though it is not absolutely certain. In the Buddhist persecution which began at the opening of the sixth century A. D. Kumarila was a chief agent. This persecution had concluded before Sankar's birth and he himself names an immediate predecessor of Kumarila. The Malabar history puts him a hundred years after Kumarila: and if the reign of this king be placed about 550 A. D., the time in which Sankara flourished may be reckoned between 650 and 740 A. D. This view is confirmed by an allusion in the History of Cashmir to a great discussion amongst the learned, in which the victory was given to some Bengali strangers. Lalitādyā, who reigned between 710—750 A. D., was then living. Now we know that Sankar repeatedly held discussions with various classes of pandits, and thereby greatly promoted the growth of Vedāntism; also that one of the places which he visited was Cashmir: on this account the above allusion is thought to apply to him. His philosophical victories are celebrated in the *Prabodh*

Chandroday, and from his time, the Vedánt held the foremost place among the schools of Hindu philosophy. As we have said, he travelled far and wide and disputed every where for his views of theology. He gathered many disciples, and left to them an immense mass of Vedántic learning as the result of his own studies. Amongst these writings, which are highly honoured to the present day, stands first his *Commentary* on the *Sárírik Sûtras*, entitled *Sárírik Mimánsa Bháshya*. His *Scholia* to the Vedántic Upanishads and *Bhagavat-Gita* rank next in value; and lastly, the *Atmábodh*, *Upadesh Sahasri*, *Panchadosi* and other original works, in which he describes the system in his own way.

Next to the writings of Vyás, the *Sûtras* and *Bhagavat-Gíta*, the COMMENTARIES OF SANKARA on these works and the Vedas, are the best *authorities* for the Vedánt system. Hence they have been commented on and expounded by others, as Anandagiri, Adwaitánanda, &c. The great number of these commentaries is a proof of the impulse given by this great scholar to the Vedántic school. In addition to them various elementary works have been published on the system. One of the latest and most popular is the VEDÁNTA SÁR; it is mentioned here, because it has recently been made accessible to students in Bengal. This little work was written by Sadánanda, the disciple of Adwaitánanda and gives a systematic outline of the chief doctrines of the Vedánt with arguments in their favour. It dwells especially on those parts of the science which describe the *mode* of learning it and the way in which the necessity for it (caused by the world's ignorance) arose. It is therefore in some parts exceedingly abstruse and difficult to comprehend. The edition published in Calcutta by the Tattwabodhiní Sabhá, contains the Sanskrit text, with a Bengali translation and two Sanskrit commentaries. There is also printed with it a celebrated work by Sankara Achárjya, the *Hastámalakam* accompanied by a Bengali translation and Sanskrit commentary. From these sources of information, let us now describe the system and its

doctrines. The Vedánta Sár treats of it under four heads : the *person qualified* to study the system ; its *object*, the *reunion* of the supreme and individual souls ; the *connection* as shown by various categories, and the *four means* to be employed in the study. As there are various objections to this arrangement, when brought into comparison with that of other authorities, we have made one of our own, with a view to exhibit in the clearest way information derived from the whole.

SECTION I.—*Definition of Vedántism ; its scope and aim ; the authorities from whence it is derived ; the conditions and mode of studying it.*

A brief *definition* of the term Vedánta is contained in the *Vedánta Sár*.* “The name Vedánta applies to the arguments of the Upanishads ; also to the Sáririk Sútras and other Shástras auxiliary thereto !” The *object* of the system is to show “the unity between the sentient soul and Brahma, the soul in its pure state.”† Hence it may be described as a *desire of knowing Brahma*. In the first Sutra, Vyás says : “Athato Brahmajigyásá iti :” i. e. *after proper preparation for the study, and because the knowledge of Brahma is the chief end of man*,‡ an enquiry after Brahma remains. He must be known, and therefore sought after. The knotty point then arises ; “Is this object known or unknown ?” If known, there is no need of searching after it. If unknown and unknowable, it cannot *be* known. Sankara replies to these questions thus : ‘Every man perceives the existence of himself. If he does not, he does not exist : That self is Brahma. If you reckon Brahma as self, is not all known ? No. For the chief dispute is about its *proper qualities*.

* Vedánta Sár : (Calcutta Edition) p. 2. † Ditto, p. 9.

‡ ‘Brahmábágitirhipurushártha ; Tasmádu Brahma jigyasitobyam. Commentary of Sankara A’chárya on the BRAHMA SÚTRAS : p. 4. Calcutta Edition, 1818.

Some assert it is the *body* only; others the vital senses; others the mind; others space; and so on.' "Wherefore the desire of knowing Brahma, which the doctrines of the Vedánt examine, conjoined with reasoning not opposed to the traditionary system, and having felicity for its end, is praised in this introduction."

How then is the true knowledge of Brahma to be attained. All the schools of Hindu philosophy recognize three ways of obtaining knowledge in general: the perceptions of the senses; the deductions of reason; and tradition or revelation. In the search after Brahma, however, the first two methods are inadmissible. He is beyond the sphere of sense; and reason will fail to understand him. Sankara remarks this in many passages of his commentary. "By the eye of none is he perceived, from its defect of form; neither is he understood by the voice, since he cannot be named, nor by the other senses."* "The senses have naturally for their object external things, not Brahma."† Again, "it is clear from the Shás-tras that he is not to be reached by reasoning: that doctrine is not to be acquired by discussion."‡ "This is true; not by the senses nor by arguments is the Supreme to be proved; but by tradition he really is so."§ "Brahma we can follow after, not by reasoning, but by the doctrine of teachers given by perpetual tradition."|| "The knowledge of Brahma is employed in explaining the sense of the passages in the Shás-tras; it is not employed about other kinds of proof, such as reasoning and the like."¶ These and numerous similar passages show that the Vedantists keep to one kind of proof, which is called *pramán* 'proof,' *ágama* 'tradition,' and *Śrúti* 'hearing,' 'authority.'

The *revelation* or *tradition* on which the system is based, is embodied in the Shás-tras. (Sank. Br. Sút. p. 6.) "For understanding the true nature of that Brahma, the cause and

* Sank. on the Mund. III. p. 1.

† Sank. on the Ken. p. 7, line 12.

|| Ditto ditto, p. 15, line 10.

‡ Sank. Br. Sút. I. 1.2: p. 6.

§ Ditto ditto, p. 14, line 5.

¶ Sank. Br. Sút. p. 5.

authority are the Rig Veda and other Shástras mentioned. For by the authority of the Shástras is Brahma, the cause of the origin, preservation and destruction of the world, understood. . . . That Brahma, omnipresent, almighty, the cause of the production, preservation and destruction of the world, is known by the Vedántic Shástras. How? On account of their tendencies. For in all the Vedánta Shástras, the passages are so written, that men may see Brahma and understand his meaning." But the knowledge of the Shástras is not altogether sufficient. A scholar may find a difficulty in getting at their true *meaning*. This meaning is to be obtained from *masters*, pandits and others, well acquainted with the Shástras, who themselves received it from others who were their teachers. "He who knows the Shástras, will search after the knowledge of Brahma, not from his own judgment," but from the instructions of his master. Hence the great honour paid in Hindustan to learned instructors, and the large number of scholars who in former days attended them. All the Shástras exhibit examples of the teacher instructing his disciples, and holding discussions with them on their subjects of study. It is this circumstance that has given rise to the many branches, that have sprung up in the various schools of philosophy, and which have derived their weight from the skill with which any pandit advocated a peculiar interpretation of his book of authority.

The series of teachers, through whom the doctrine has come down to us, must have had a beginning: and it is plainly declared that the beginning is *Brahma* himself. Many statements to this effect will be quoted in the next chapter; at present it will be sufficient merely to cite the following. "Of the great body of Shástras, beginning with the Rig Veda, embracing many sciences, like a light, illuminating all things, and possessed of the quality of omniscience, the origin and cause is Brahma. For such a Shástra as the Rig Veda, endowed with the quality of omniscience, can have no other origin than an omniscient one."

But the knowledge of Brahma is not to be attained by every one. Desirable as it may be, for the results which professedly follow it, Brahma has his favourites for whom it is reserved. In the Brahma Sūtras (I.3. 34-38) it is decided after some discussion that none but the twice-born are competent to study the Shástras. "The purification of the *úpanayan* (the investiture of the sacred thread) is the ground of instruction : therefore none but Bráhmans, Khetriyas, and Vaisyas have authority to study the Vedas : Sudras are forbidden to do so." But not only are women, Sudras and Mlechhas excluded from a knowledge of the science, even among the twice-born a man will neither possess the ability nor the power to attain that knowledge, unless Brahma causes him to do so. On this Sankar says ; " Sometimes a scholar endowed with a good intellect and free from errors, understands even a difficult thing as soon as it is heard ; another not so. We see this in the Shástras. Thus after it had been said ; ' The being who is beheld in the eye, he is the soul, the immortal, the fearless one ; he is Brahma,' Virochan, king of the Asurs, though instructed by Prajápati himself, on account of the perversity of his nature, understood that that soul is the *body*. Even the king of the gods, once, twice, thrice did not understand it ; but his natural perversity being removed, he at once understood that it was Brahma. So in the daily life of students one understands a thing well : another, its opposite : another, nothing."

We notice next the *manner* in which the study is to be prosecuted. It is reckoned most important in itself, and can be taken up only in the most serious way. Before a student betakes himself to a master, he must be properly qualified. The description of the qualified person [Adhikári] is given in the Vedánta Sár, (pp. 3-10, Calcutta Ed.) and in the Commentary of Sankar on the Brahma Sūtras. He must first find out the sense of the Vedas, by the study (according to rule) of the Vedas and Vedángas. He must in this or a previous birth renounce all the objects of desire, such as sacri-

fices which gain heaven; also works which are forbidden, such as killing bráhmans and the like. By the performance of the *Sandhyábandhan* and other appointed ceremonies; by offering expiations; and engaging in acts of internal worship, he must purify his mind from errors and fix it upon Brahma. He has then to perform 'the four means,' *sáadhan chatushtay*.

a. He must distinguish between the real and unreal thing; that is, must consider every thing unreal except Brahma. *b.* He must free himself from all desire of enjoying the fruits of merit, whether given in this world or the next. "The casting away of all desire must necessarily precede the knowledge of the Supreme Soul." *c.* He must exclude from his mind and from his senses every object which does not refer to Brahma. He must endure cold and heat without knowing a difference between them. He must be prepared to contemplate Brahma alone and to believe all that his teacher says. *d.* Lastly, he must have an earnest desire after liberation from self and absorption into Brahma. These exercises completed, he will be duly 'qualified:' he may then repair to a teacher for further instruction. "As a man with a blazing head goes into a pool of water, so the qualified person, burned by the fire of birth, death and other worldly misery, with offerings in his hands, repairs to a teacher learned in the Vedas and putting his faith in Brahma, and becomes his follower." (Ved. Sár, p. 10). Implicit confidence in the teacher is the first condition of receiving instruction. Only from the master is the knowledge of Brahma to be obtained at all: *Guru prasáda labhyán*. The whole process is however so difficult that few can be expected to go through it, and reap the benefits which it is intended to secure; and this the Vedánt confesses. "A few among ten thousand mortals strive for perfection; and but a few of those who strive and become perfect, know me according to my nature."*

* Sir Charles Wilkins's *Bhagavat-Gítá*, Chap. VII. p. 69.

SECTION 2.—*Of Brahma.*

The *existence* of the Supreme Brahma is a point which the Vedāntic authorities take no trouble to prove. It appears to them self-evident: and indeed cannot be proved; Brahma being entirely superior to human reasoning. His various *attributes*, however are enumerated again and again at great length: especially in the Sūtras and the commentary upon them. Thus: "Brahma is eternal, omniscient, pervader of all things, ever satisfied in nature, ever pure, intelligent and free; wisdom and delight." "That being is the true, unchanging, eternal one. Like ether he penetrates all things; he is free from all change, ever satisfied, without limbs, in nature light itself. He, in whom right and wrong with their effects, and the three times have no place, is without body, and is freedom itself."* "That supreme Lord pervades all things, and is independent and one; there is no one like him, no one superior to him; the whole world obeys his will. Why? He is the internal spirit of every thing that is; who, by means of the divisions of an impure delusion in names and forms, makes himself, the ONE God, having always but one taste, and renowned for pure intellect, multiform."† The tenth and eleventh Sections of the *Bhagabat-Gītā* contain noble descriptions of the majesty and splendour of the Supreme.

As to his *nature*, Brahma is declared to be Supreme Intelligence. "On account of the eternal essence of intellect in Brahma, (as light is the essence of the sun,) no regard can be allowed to other supports of intelligence." This intelligence is not only compared to light, as in the passage just quoted, but is said to *be* light. "Though Brahma is in his very nature intellect, yet the word light (*jyótiḥ*) describes him, as it does the cause of the illumination of the whole world."‡ So in the following striking passage; "As a mass

* Sankara on the Brahma Sūtras, pp. 8, 10.

† Commentary of Sankara on the Katha Upanishad.

‡ Sank. on the Br. Sut. pp. 19, 37.

of salt is, not internally, not externally, but entirely, a mass of savour; so that spirit is, not internally, not externally, but entirely, a mass of intelligence."* He is also described as *existence* pre-eminently, and as enjoying perpetual delight. These notions are all combined in the term 'Sachchidánanda.'

Brahma is not always invested with these attributes. In the intervals between the great ages, termed *Kalpas*, he is said to be altogether *Nirgun* 'without qualities;' and to recline upon the leaves of the Banyan tree in a state of profound repose. The *Sûtras* (III. 2. 13, 14.) declare the latter to be the *true* description: not the former, nor the two together. It is only in relation to the creation those qualities are attributed to him. Really "he is unaffected by the modifications of the world; as the clear crystal, seemingly coloured by the red blossom of the hibiscus, is not the less really pellucid." "He changes not: all change is expressly denied him by texts in the Vedas:" (III. 2. 11, 12.) "The luminous sun, though single, yet reflected in water, becomes various; and so does the unborn divine soul, in various bodies." (III. 2. 20).

His *relation to the Universe* in general is clearly stated in the shâstras. He is the *cause* of it. "All the Vedântic authorities show the Spirit to be the cause of the Universe." (Br. Sût. I. 1. 10.) One text to this effect has already been quoted: "He is the Almighty Creator of the world, and the all-wise author of the Shâstras." (I. 1. 2.) "Brahma is almighty, ready for every action, without any organs or instruments of action. His will alone is a sufficient cause of the creation of the Universe: and he has done it for sport." (II. 1. 30, 33.) "This whole world was spread abroad by me in my invisible form. All things are dependent upon me, but I am not dependent upon them." [Bh. Gitâ, Ch. IX.] The *mode* of creation is also described. He is said to have con-

* Vedânta or Brahma Sûtras, III. 2. 16. The edition we refer to is that published in Calcutta, in 1843, by Bábu Nimái Charan Mittri.

ceived the *desire* to create, and to have used certain special words in the process. "From Vedic words, the universe, beginning with the gods, has sprung." Respecting the words employed, it is said; "Uttering the word *bhúr* he created the earth." "He formed bodies with two feet and four feet, and becoming a bird he entered into them," filling them as their creator spirit. [III. 2. 22.] He is also the *destroyer* of the universe. At the end of a fixed period, by a certain necessity of his nature, Brahma destroys and absorbs into himself the universe he has created; only however to reproduce it when another period returns. This subject is fully described in the Vedás, and we shall see more of it in the next chapter.

Brahma is the *internal ruler* of the universe: this may readily be conceived; but he is also said to be its *material cause*. [The expression *material cause* is most generally employed to denote the meaning here intended: but is unsuitable in the case of the Vedánt because, as we shall immediately see, in its theory no such thing as *matter* exists.] Thus the second Súra affirms: "He, from whom are the birth, preservation, and destruction of the universe, is BRAHMA." Here the word 'birth,' *Janma*,* is employed, not 'creation,' *Srijan*. The doctrine follows immediately from another, that Brahma is himself the *very substance* and *material* of which the universe is made. This undisguised Pantheism is taught in the clearest manner in the Vedántic authorities which we have cited above. It is the great *basis* on which the system rests. If it be not taught, the very aim of the system is set aside, and the ignorance which man possesses of the real union between the individual soul and the Supreme, can never be put away. But to put it away is the very end and object for which the system has been framed. The fact therefore of the real identity between Brahma and the soul, between Brahma and the whole universe, is asserted again and again, and illustrated by numerous examples. It is carefully laid down in the Sútras of Vyás, (I. 4. 23—26.)

* জন্মাদিস্যয়তঃ

and defended by a long course of reasoning. More than this, the opinions of the Sāṅkhya philosophers, who advocate a 'plastic nature' and a real 'material cause' in its proper sense, are shown to be opposed to the doctrine of the Vedās. These Sūtras say (I. 4. 23 ;) "Brahma is also the substance (*prakṛiti*) of the universe ; for so the propositions [in the Vedās] and their illustrations require : the reference to his desire and the distinct mention of both [lead to the same conclusion]. Because he makes himself by transformation [both active and passive]." The commentary of Sankar Āchārjya elucidates this concise and obscure statement : it contains among other things the following passages. "It has been said above that as we ought to know the laws, since they are the cause of our comfort, so ought BRAHMA to be known as the cause of endless felicity. It has been declared that from him are the origin, preservation and destruction of the universe. Now as this description may apply both to the *material cause* (as clay and gold are the material cause of pots and bracelets), and to the *efficient cause* (as the potter and goldsmith are efficient causes), a doubt arises, of what kind is the causality of Brahma. Brahma must be reckoned both the 'substance' (that is the material cause) and the efficient cause. Why ? Because 'the propositions [of the Vedās] and their illustrations,' found in the śāstras, 'require' us to believe it. The 'proposition' is this ; 'Hast thou asked (the teacher) about that notion by which the thing unheard becomes heard, the thing unthought becomes thought, and that which is unintelligible becomes understood ?' This knowledge of other things respects the knowledge of their material cause, since the effect differs in no wise from that cause ; but it is different from the efficient cause, as a carpenter differs from a house. The 'illustrations' given point out the same cause ; viz. 'as by a ball of clay, all clay is known, and the change is one of name (produced) by words only, while in the thing itself there is clay only,' &c. This example points out the material cause, as it does also in the

following cases : ‘As by one golden ornament, every golden thing is known ; as by one knife for cutting the nails, every iron thing is known, &c.’ Again when it is said, ‘he from whom all these creatures are born,’ the shástra points out their origin, that is, their material cause, for he who begets any thing is its origin.” On the 24th Sútra, Sankar says ; “The reference to his ‘desire’ shows him to be both the efficient and material cause. For in the passages where it is said, ‘He desired : I will become manifold and will produce ;’ the *desire* has reference to him as the efficient cause ; and from the words *I will become manifold* the material cause follows. Again, the same fact is learned from the ‘distinct declaration’ [see the 25th Sútra] that both the production and destruction of the universe are from him. This shows him to be the material substance of the universe ; ‘All these creatures spring from the æther and into the æther fall.’ That from which any thing springs and into which it is dissolved, must be considered its material cause, as the earth is the cause of rice and barley. Again [see 26th Sútra] Brahma is proved to be the substance of the universe from the words of the shástras, ‘he himself transforms himself.’ *He himself* speaks of him as an active agent ; but *transforms himself* points him out as passive.”

Of the reasoning of the great commentator in these passages, I shall at present say nothing ; I only wish to show that in his opinion these Sútras of Vyás distinctly declare Brahma to be not only the efficient cause of the universe, but its material cause likewise ; in other words the very material of which it is made.

But the Sútras do not leave the subject here. They not only state the doctrine positively, but take up objections and opinions contrary to it. The philosophers of the Sáukhya school assert that the universe is made of a ‘plastic nature’ and a ‘material cause’ independent of the Deity. This assertion the Sútras endeavour to disprove, showing that that material cause is the Deity himself : thus establishing their

Pantheistic doctrine on the firmest basis, by the direct denial of the proposition which contradicts it. The *objections* to the doctrine are also taken up by Sankar, and in the best way he can, he endeavours to answer them. 'How can this universe, [it is asked] which is manifold, void of life, impure, irrational, proceed from him who is one, living, pure and rational?' [He answers]: 'The lifeless world can proceed from Brahma just as lifeless hair can spring from a living man.' 'But in the universe we find him who enjoys and him who is enjoyed: how can he be both?' 'Such are the changes of the sea. Foam, waves, billows, bubbles, are not different from the sea which is in its native waters. Still a difference is perceived in them by turns, and an activity which agrees with their mutual union. Nor, though they are identical with the sea, do these changes obtain the condition of each other; nor does the difference follow from the nature of the sea, if they do not obtain these conditions by turns. In the same way, he who enjoys and he who is enjoyed do not by turns gain each other's condition, nor are they different from the supreme Brahma.' Again, "There is no difference between the universe and Brahma. The effect is not different from its cause. He is the soul; the soul is he. The same earth produces diamonds, rock-crystal, and red orpiment. The same sun produces many kinds of plants. The same nourishment is converted into hair, nails, and so on. As milk is changed into curds, and water to ice, so is Brahma variously transformed without external aids. So the spider spins its web from its own substance; spirits assume various shapes; cranes propagate without males; and the lotus grows from swamp to swamp without organs of locomotion, &c." (Br. Sút. II. I. 14—26, with commentary). Again; "*Nothing exists but he, although different texts of the Vedás seem to imply the contrary.*" [III. 2. 29].

The BHAGABAT GÍTÁ is not silent on a doctrine so vital. The following are some of its statements. [Chap. IV. p. 24]: "Brahma is the oblation; Brahma is the clarified butter;

Brahma is the fire of the altar ; by Brahma is the sacrifice performed ; and Brahma is to be obtained by him, who makes Brahma alone the object of his works.”* [C. VII. p. 70] : “I am the creation and dissolution of the whole universe. There is not any thing greater than I : all things hang on me, even as precious gems upon a string. I am moisture in the water ; light in the sun and moon ; invocation in the Vedás ; sound in the firmament ; human nature in mankind ; sweet-smelling-savour in the earth ; glory in the source of light : in all things I am life ; I am zeal in the zealous ; and know, O ARJÚN, that I am the eternal seed of all nature.” [C. XV. p. 113] : “Know that the light which proceedeth from the sun and illuminateth the whole world, and the light which is in the moon and in fire, are mine. I pervade all things in nature, and guard them with my beams. I am the moon, whose nature it is to give the quality of taste and relish, and to cherish the herbs and plants of the field. I am the fire residing in the bodies of all things which have life, where joined with the two spirits which are called *Pran* and *Opan*, I digest the food which they eat.” [C. VI. p. 68] : “The man, whose mind is endued with this devotion, and looketh on all things alike, beholds the Supreme Soul in all things and all things in the Supreme Soul. He who beholds me in all things and all things in me, I forsake not him, and he forsaketh not me.” “I am the sacrifice ; I am the worship ; I am the spices ; I am the invocation ; I am the ceremony to the manes of the ancestors ; I am the provisions ; I am the fire and I am the victim. I am the mystic figure Om ; the RÍG, the SÁM and YAJÚR Vedás ;” [C. IX. p. 80].

The VEDÁNTA SÁR takes up the doctrine at the very outset, and lays down principles, the ultimate development of which is intended to establish it upon the strongest ground. I will quote only one passage. “There is no distinction

* ব্রহ্মার্পণং ব্রহ্মহবি ব্রহ্মাগ্নৌ ব্রহ্মণাহুতম ।

ব্রহ্মৈব তেন গন্তব্যং ব্রহ্মকর্মে সমাধিনা ॥

between the universality and the speciality,* [names denoting Brahma and individual souls respectively ;] as there is none between a forest and the trees ; and water as one thing and water as many waters. There is likewise no distinction between the Supreme Ruler and individual intelligences, in which that universality and speciality are inherent ; as there is none between the sky which covers the forest and the trees, and the sky which is reflected by the ocean and many waters." "Brahma is by his *máyās* manifold." When the teacher has properly instructed the qualified scholar and by the appointed means has 'purified' the terms *that* and *thou*, and has examined the meaning of the infinite one by the 'great sentence,' that scholar can say ; 'I am the eternal, pure, omniscient, free, true, self-existent, ever-blessed, infinite Brahma, the being without a second.' He to whom it was said, 'Thou art He,' can for himself now say ; 'I am He.'

The following passage is from the HASTÁMALAKAM already mentioned as a book of authority, and printed at the Tattwabodhini press. The work opens with the following questions put by the writer, the celebrated Pandit Sankar Achárjya, to a beautiful boy whom he professes to have seen in the course of his travels for scholastic victories ; "Who, O child, art thou ? whose son art thou ? what is thy name ? whither wilt thou go ? and whence hast thou come ? for the love of me give me a true answer to these questions." The boy replies : "I am not a man, nor a god, nor a fairy ; I am neither a bráhmaṇ, nor a khetriya, nor a house-holder, nor a sannyási, nor a beggar, but I am the all-pervading, omniscient Spirit." He then describes himself in twelve sentences containing a brief view of the Vedántic doctrine. The fifth of these is as follows : "He who in his own form is separated from the mind, the eye, and other senses ; who is the mind of the mind, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the life of life, and cannot be perceived by the mind, the eye, and other

* मयसि ; दयसि. Vedánta Sár : pp. 17, 18. Calcutta edition, published at the Tattwabodhini Press, 1849.

senses, that Spirit who is eternal Intelligence, am I." [6]: "As in the water of numerous vessels the reflections of one sun are rendered manifold; so he, who is himself light and pure wisdom, although without a second, is illusively manifested in many ways by the numerous instincts of numerous living things; that eternal and omniscient Spirit am I." The testimonies from these authorities might be greatly multiplied; but those adduced are surely sufficient to satisfy any unprejudiced mind that the doctrine of Pantheism is one of the most important and clearly stated doctrines of the Vedantic system as taught by Vyas and his followers. Among European scholars who have read their works without reference to their religious bearings, the opinion is unanimous that the doctrine is unquestionably there.

SECTION 3.—*Of the Universe and its Elements.*

In the preceding Section it has been shown that the universe has for its substance and material the Supreme Brahma himself: that it was created or produced from a desire in his own mind; and was called forth by special words. In this Section we shall notice its various *divisions*, the *elements* of which it is said to be composed, the *qualities* it possesses, and similar topics.

In the Vedantic authorities we read of no splendid theory of astronomy, based on the great law of gravitation and turned to the most practical uses. We read of no geology showing, from the very structure of the solid world, the mode of its formation and the ages through which it has passed. A different philosophy altogether awaits us: and strange theories take the place of well-authenticated facts.

According to some of the authorities, the universe is divided into three 'Loks' (*Trilok*) heaven, earth, hades. By others the division is made more particularly into two, called the *Upper* and *Lower* worlds; each of which contains seven divi-

sions placed one above the other. In the Upper Lok there is first *Bhúr-lok*, the earth: then *Bhuba-lok*, the region between the earth and sun, the abode of the Munis; *Swar-lok*, the heaven of Indra; next *Maha-lok*, the abode of Bhrigu and other saints; *Jana-lok*, the residence of the sons of Brahma; *Tapa-lok*, the residence of the 'Vairágis:' and lastly *Satya-lok* or *Brahma-lok*, the abode of BRAHMA himself. Below the earth are the lower worlds with their seven divisions placed one beneath the other, the residence of various evil beings. They are named, Atala, Bitala, Sutala, Rasatala, Talátala, Mahátala, and Pátál.* In various texts are mentioned other regions which must be considered as subdivisions of those now enumerated. Thus in ascending from the earth through Bhuba-lok to the heaven of Indra, the soul of the perfect follower of Brahma passes first to the *realm of fire*; thence to the *regents of the day* and of the half lunations; thence to the *abode of the gods*; to air or wind; thence by a straight road to the *moon* (which lies therefore far beyond the sun); thence to the region of *lightning* (beyond the moon). Above that is the realm of *Varúna* the ruler of rain; then follows the kingdom of Indra.† All the universe sprang from the great egg of Brahma. "The illusive power of ignorance creates the universe from the internal organisms of Brahma's Egg."‡

The various *organic bodies* existing in this universe are distributed into four classes. They are either (1) produced *from the womb*, or (2) *from eggs*, or (3) *from damp*, or (4) *from germs*. Those produced from the womb are born alive; as men, animals, &c. The oviparous came forth from an egg; as birds, serpents, &c. Those produced from damp are worms, insects, &c. which are born from hot moisture. Those produced from germs are those which emerge from the earth; as creepers, trees, &c."§

These bodies all spring from *five subtile elements*; viz., *air*,

* Vedánta Sár, p. 40.

† Vedánta Sár, p. 23.

‡ Brahma Sútras; IV. 3. 6.

§ Vedánta Sár, pp. 40, 41.

ether, fire, water, and earth. "Ether and air are created by Brahma. But he himself has no origin, no procreator, nor maker; for he is eternal. So fire, water, and earth proceed mediately from him, being evolved successively, the one from the other: as fire from air, and this from ether. The element of earth is meant in divers passages where food is said to proceed from water; for rain fertilizes the earth. It is by his will, not by their own act that they are so evolved; and conversely, they merge one into the other in the reversed order and are re-absorbed at the general dissolution of worlds, previous to the renovation of all things."* The following passage from the Vedánta Sár shows how these elements are compounded and re-compounded with each other, so as to produce an immense variety of objects. "The gross elements are composed of the subtile ones according to the combination of five (*panchikritam*). The combination of five is—to divide each of the five elements into two parts; then equally to divide each of the five former of the ten parts, into four parts; to separate these four of the one-half from their own parts, and to join them with the parts of the other elements. The combination of five is proved beyond doubt by the Sruti. In that state, sound is manifested in the ether; sound and feeling in the wind; sound, feeling and colour in the fire; these three with taste in the water; and these four with smell in the earth. From these five elements combined in this manner were produced the different Lokas or worlds."†

The *order*, in which the original elements were created, is differently stated by the authorities. The difficulty and uncertainty originated with the Upanishads, as we shall see; and are distinctly acknowledged in the Sútras, where an effort is made to explain them.

The universe thus made *rests upon Brahma* by whom it is sustained and preserved: hence he is called *Stithi-karttá*. 'This doctrine is the bridge of immortality.'‡ It will con-

* Brahma Sútras; II. 3. 10.. 14. Colebrooke's Essays, I. 353.

† Vedánta Sár, pp. 36—40.

‡ Brahma Sútras; I. 3. 1.

tinue so to rest till the *Mahápralay*, destruction of all things. At the end of the days of Brahma [a *kalpa*] the first three of the Upper worlds are consumed by fire : and at the end of one hundred of his years, the whole of the universe is re-absorbed into him from whom it was first evolved. "Those who are acquainted with day and night know that the day of Brahma is as a thousand revolutions of the YUGS, and that his night extendeth for a thousand more. On the coming of that day, all things proceed from invisibility to visibility ; so, on the approach of night, they are all dissolved away in that which is called invisible. The universe having existed is again dissolved : and now again, on the approach of day, by divine necessity it is re-produced." "At the end of a *Kalpa* all things, O son of Kunti, return into my primordial source ; and at the beginning of another *Kalpa*, I create them all again."*

It is important to notice that according to the Vedántic authorities, among the objects of creation, various *Deities* hold a real and conspicuous place. In the Sútras, Varúna and Indra are distinctly mentioned as ruling over certain regions of the Upper worlds. In the Vedánta Sár, the ceremonies which are regularly performed by bráhmans and which include the worship of debtás, are declared to be an important part of the preparation of him who would be a successful disciple of the system. But chiefly in the Bhagabat Gítá, numerous deities are clearly recognized, not as poetical personifications, but as real existent beings ; and their worship is approved and shown to be beneficial. "Remember the gods, they will grant you the enjoyment of your wishes : " (Ch. III.) "Those who worship the debtás go unto them : " (Ch. VII.) Other passages will be quoted hereafter.

SECTION 4.—*Of Man.*

Man is regarded by the Vedánt as formed of two elements ; the *individual soul* and the *vehicle* made for its use. We

* Bhag. Gítá ; Chs. VIII. and IX.

shall consider the latter first. The *vehicle* or abode of the individual soul consists of two bodies ; one more refined, the other more gross. The former is called the *Súkhma Sarír* or subtle body ; the latter is the *Sthúl Sarír* or gross body, and is made of those limbs or organs visible to us. The *Súkhma Sarír* is clearly described in the *Vedánta Sár*, pp. 25, &c. "What is the subtle body ? It is the *Linga Sarír* possessing seventeen organs. What are the seventeen organs ? They are the five organs of intelligence, the understanding, reason, the five organs of action and the five airs. What are the five organs of intelligence ? The ear, touch, the eye, tongue, and smell. They are formed from parts of the first quality (the *Sattwa gúna**) of the ether and other elements, respectively ; that is from the first quality of the ether is the ear ; from that of the air, touch ; from that of the light, the eye ; from that of water, the tongue ; and from that of the earth, smell. What is the understanding ? It is that action of the mind which asserts. What is 'reason' ? That action of the mind by which it weighs arguments for and against any thing. Thinking and consciousness are the only two actions included in understanding and reason. What are they ? Thinking is that action of the mind which enquires ; and consciousness that by which it makes its actions its own. (Understanding and reason) both spring from the united first qualities of the ether and other elements : that they do so spring is evident from the fact that they have power to manifest."† The subtle body is formed of *three cases* included one within the other, and made up of the organs mentioned. The *Vedánta Sár* goes on to mention these. "The understanding joined with the five organs of intelligence is called the 'intelligent case' of the soul ; (*bigyánmay kosh.*) This intelligent case possessing the consciousness of power, enjoyment, pleasure, and pain, journeying to this and the other worlds, is called

* Respecting these 'qualities,' *Guna*, see a passage from the *Bhagabat Gítá*, quoted in the next Section.

† *Vedánta Sár*, pp. 25—27.

the administering sentient soul. The reason, joined with the five organs of action is the mental case of the soul (*manomay kosh*). What are the five organs of action? Speech, hand, foot, evacuation, generation. These spring in order from parts of the five elements of the second quality (the *Raja guna*) respectively. That is; speech is from the second quality of ether; the hand from that of air; the foot from that of light, and so on. What are the five airs? They are respiration, inspiration, circulation, the guttural air and the equalizing air (of digestion). Respiration is the air which goes upwards through the nose; inspiration is that which goes downwards to the intestines and other parts; that of circulation goes throughout the whole interior. The guttural air moving upwards turns back again and has its place in the throat. The equalizing air passing through the middle of the body equalizes the food which is taken by eating and drinking." Other philosophers, as for instance those of the Sāṅkhya school, maintain five airs different from these; viz. those of eructation, of winking, of hunger, of yawning and of nourishing. Others consider that the latter are included in the former. "The five airs are produced by the united second qualities of the five elements and form together with the organs of action the *vital case* (*prāṇmay kosh*). Among these cases the intelligent case, having the faculty of knowledge, is the originator; the mental case, having the faculty of desire, is the causal; and the vital case, having the faculty of action, is the performer of works. They are called, when united, the subtile body of the soul." This lengthened extract describes very clearly and fully the Vedāntic theory of Human Physiology, and has been quoted on that account. The same is also taught by the higher authority of the Brahma Sūtras. (II. 4. &c.) From them we learn that the number of organs existing in the body is properly eleven, viz. five organs of sense (*gyānendriya*), five of action (*karmmen-āriya*) and one the 'inner sense,' the 'understanding,' which includes intellect, conscientiousness and sensation. "These

organs are finite and small ; not however minute like atoms, nor gross, as the coarser elements. These senses and organs are *not* modifications of respiration, but are different from it!" [II. 4. 17—19]. The *prán* above-mentioned, in its original meaning denotes vital action, especially respiration. In this sense it is a modification of Brahma. It is not wind, nor the air breathed ; nor is it the vital act of a special organ. It includes five such acts, viz. those above mentioned as the acts of the 'five airs.' The *móde* in which the body is sustained is stated most curiously in the Sútras. The passage is as follows. "It is the Supreme Ruler, not the individual soul, who is described in various passages of the Vedas, as transforming himself into divers combinations ; assuming various names and shapes, deemed terrene, aqueous or igneous, according to the predominance of one or the other element. When nourishment is received into the corporeal frame, it undergoes a threefold distribution, according to its fineness or coarseness. Corn and other terrene food become flesh : but the coarser portion is ejected, and the finer nourishes the mental organ. Water is converted into blood : the coarser particles are rejected as urine, the finer support the breath. Oil or other combustible substance deemed igneous becomes marrow : the coarser part is deposited as bone, and the finer supplies the faculty of speech."* When the *dissolution* of the gross organism takes place, a process occurs the reverse of that 'development' which has now been described. "The speech of a dying person, followed by the ten exterior faculties (not the corporeal organs themselves) is absorbed into the mind, for the action of the outer organ ceases before that of the mind. This in like manner retires into the breath, attended likewise by all the other vital functions. The breath, accompanied by them is withdrawn into the 'living soul' which governs the corporeal organs, as the attendants of a king assemble round him when he is setting out upon a journey. The 'living soul' attended with all its faculties, retires within a

* Br. Sútras, II. 4. 21. Colebrooke, I. 357.

rudiment of body composed of light, with the rest of the five elements in a subtile state. In that condition the soul united to a subtile elementary frame, conjoined with the vital faculties, remains till the dissolution of world, when it merges in the supreme deity. That frame is imperceptible to those who see the death of the body. It is not injured by the burning of the body or by any thing else. It can be known by its heat as long as it remains in the gross body; and that body which was warmed by it becomes cold on its departure." [IV. 2. 1—11]. It is most important to notice, that "these vital acts do not take effect of themselves; they are directed and influenced by a divinity who presides over them: the living spirit is, however, conscious only of the enjoyment and not of the presiding power." [II. 4. 14].

Such is the *structure* of the organism which forms the abode of the sentient soul. The various *states* in which it exists are also points dwelt on by Vedántic writers. During life these are three in number, viz. waking, dreaming, and profound sleep. A fourth may be added that of death: and a fifth that of fainting and coma. These states are thus compared by Sankar. 'When awake, a living man, owing to the illusion of *máyá*, perceives an inherent distinction between the objects of sense: in dreams the mind retires into itself and from its own imagination creates new worlds: in profound sleep both these illusions are wanting, and the mind reverts to its true union with the Supreme.* The latter state is thus specially described. "When a man sleeps, speech goes into the mind; the eye into the mind; the intellect into the mind; the ear into the mind; when he wakes, from the mind they again return."† "In profound sleep the soul retires to the bosom of the Supreme by the way of the pericardial arteries," and obtains its own form. [Br. Sút. III. 2. 1—10.]

For whom is this *organism* with its strange structure and states provided? Who abides in it? The answer is: The *individual soul*. In the last Section it was shown that all

* Sankar on the Br. Sút. I. 1. 9, p. 23. † Br. Sút. p. 43.

matter is only Brahma himself, and that he is the substance and material of every thing in the universe. We shall naturally expect therefore that, when we enquire into the nature of the individual soul, we shall be referred at once to the Supreme; and this we find to be the case. The chief part of man is the spark of the Supreme Soul, shining by its own light: the living soul (or life) joined with that, is as it were its shadow. Both reside in a cavern of the heart. "In the Supreme æther, seek the soul which has entered the cavern (of the heart)." This æther is stated to be exceedingly diminutive, and possessed of such other qualities as necessitate its being considered the Supreme himself. "The distinction between the living soul and the Supreme Ruler arises from an illusion, not from the thing itself." "Other philosophers think that the form of the living soul is a real one. To refute all these, who oppose the true doctrine of the soul's unity, is this work composed. The Supreme Ruler is one, eternal, of one form, the source of mind, who by a deceptive ignorance has become multiform."* "The soul is a portion of the Supreme Ruler, as a spark is of fire. The relation between them is not that of master and servant, ruler and subject: but like that of whole and part." [B. S. II. 3. 43]. "It is even a portion of myself that in this animal world is the universal spirit of all things. It draws together the five organs and the mind, which is the sixth, that it may obtain a body, and that it may leave it again: and *Iswar*, having taken them under his charge, accompanies them from his own abode, as the breeze the fragrance from the flowers. He presides over all the organs. The foolish see it not, attended by the *gunas* or qualities, either in expiring, in being, or in enjoying; but those that are endued with the eye of wisdom behold it." (*Bhag. Gitâ*: Ch. XV. p. 112). "There is no distinction between the Supreme Ruler and individual intelligences, as there is none between the sky which covers the forest and the trees, and the sky

* Br. Sûtras, pp. 80, 81.

which is reflected by the ocean and many waters." (Ved. Sár. p. 18). On this subject the Upanishads speak not less plainly. Possessing the nature of Brahma, the soul is endowed with his *attributes*. "The soul is not a thing of which a man may say; 'It hath been, it is about to be, or is to be hereafter;' for it is a thing without birth: it is ancient, constant and eternal; and is not to be destroyed in this its mortal frame. The weapon divides it not: the fire burns it not: the wind drieth it not away. For it is indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible, and is not to be dried away. It is eternal, universal, permanent, immovable: it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable." (*Bhag. Gitá*: Ch. II. p. 37.)

This soul of man, however, which in European philosophy is reckoned one, is, according to Vedántic authorities, strangely compounded. The *understanding*, as well as the organs of sense and action, is made up from the five elements; and on the death of the body is re-absorbed into those elements, according to the order in which it was developed from them. This is not the case, however, with the real *soul*. This is uncompounded. It is compared to a blazing spark from a burning flame, and is declared to be eternal and uncreated. It is not subject like the body to decay and death. It is ever active, from its own nature: even in sleep, it fails to perceive, not from any weariness in itself: but solely from the want of sensible objects on which to exert its power. This activity is a gift from the Supreme, but may be laid aside. "Just as a carpenter with his tools in his hand may rest: so the soul in its union with its instruments may enjoy repose also."

The community of origin attributed in these passages to all the souls of men, and their perfect consubstantiality with the Supreme, has not prevented the establishment among them of important divisions and ranks. The system of CASTE finds a place even in the Vedántic Philosophy: and though little is said about it, enough occurs to show how thorough was the distinction it had developed between various classes

of Hindus, even in those early times. "Mankind was created by me of four kinds distinct in their principles and in their duties." (Ch. IV. : *Gítá*.) "The respective duties of the four tribes of *Bráhma*n, *Khetriya*, *Vaisya*, and *Sudra*, are also determined by the qualities which are in their constitutions. The natural duty of the *Bráhma*n is peace, self-restraint, zeal, purity, patience, rectitude, wisdom, learning, and theology. The natural duties of the *Khetriya* are bravery, glory, fortitude, rectitude, not to flee from the field, generosity, and princely conduct. The natural duty of the *Vaisya* is to cultivate the land, tend the cattle, and buy and sell. The natural duty of a *Sudra* is *servitude*. A man being contented with his own particular lot and duty obtaineth perfection." (Ch. XVIII.) A passage has already been quoted from the *Sutras* in which the privilege of studying the *Vedas* is allowed only to the 'twice-born : ' but *Vaisyas* and *Sudras*, the *Gítá* declares, together with women and sinners, may obtain its rewards in another way ; (Ch. IX.) The ample details of the *Mánava Sástra*, the 'Institutes of Manu,' respecting caste, might be cited here, but they are too well known to render it necessary.

SECTION 5.—*The State of Man in relation to Brahma, and how he may be freed from it.*

Pantheism thoroughly contradicts the numberless acts of man's every-day life ; it is therefore only to be expected, that on so vital an element in their system the Vedántists have much to say, and many explanations to offer. In order to prove it, they boldly assume at the outset that man is in a very peculiar and unnatural state ; that he believes in a shadow, and fails to grasp the substance : and hence a special process is necessary to restore him to a proper and healthy condition.

1. They assert that man is in a state of the greatest ignorance. When Brahma, say they, evolved from himself

the various objects from which the universe is apparently composed, these objects were, from the first, under the influence of an extraordinary illusion, which prevented their knowing what was their own real character. That illusion is specially developed *in man*, who reckons himself distinct from the Supreme. But it arose in a peculiar way from Brahma himself; the consequences are felt in himself; and from him is the deliverance.

1. a. Every portion of the Universe, and especially man, is marked by one of the *three gúnas*. Mr. Colebrooke thus describes them: "The Sāṅkhya, as other Indian systems of philosophy, is much engaged with the consideration of what is termed '*the three qualities*:' if indeed, *quality* is the proper import of the term; for the scholiast of Capila understands it as meaning, not quality or accident, but substance; a modification, fettering the soul, conformably with another acceptation of *guna*, signifying a cord. The first and highest is goodness, (*sattwa*.) It is alleviating, enlightening, attended with pleasure and happiness; and virtue predominates in it. In fire it is prevalent, wherefore flame ascends and sparks fly upwards. In man when it abounds, as it does in beings of a superior order, it is the cause of virtue. The second and middlemost is foulness or passion, (*raja* or *tejah*.) It is active, urgent, and variable, attended with evil and misery. In air it predominates, wherefore wind moves transversely. In living beings, it is the cause of vice. The third and lowest is darkness, (*tamah*.) It is heavy and obstructive attended with sorrow, dullness and illusion. In earth and water it predominates, wherefore they fall or tend downwards. In living beings it is the cause of solidity. These three qualities are not mere accidents of nature, but are of its essence and enter into its composition. 'We speak of the qualities of nature, as we do of the trees of a forest,' say the Sāṅkhyas."* The *Bhagabat Gītā* says, (Ch. XIV.) "There are three *gunas* or qualities arising from *Prakriti*, [the sub-

* Colebrooke's Essays. I. 248, 249.

stance of which the universe is composed] viz. ; *Sattwa*, truth ; *Raja*, passion ; and *Tama*, darkness ; and each of them confineth the incorruptible spirit in the body. The *Sattwa-guna* because of its purity, is clear and free from defect ; and entwineth the soul with sweet and pleasant consequences and the fruit of wisdom. The *Raja-guna* is of a passionate nature, arising from the effects of worldly thirst, and imprisoneth the soul with the consequences produced from action. The *Tama-guna* is the offspring of ignorance [in a former birth] and the confounder of all the faculties of the mind ; and it imprisoneth the soul with intoxication, sloth and idleness. The *Sattwa* prevaleth in felicity : the *Raja* in action ; the *Tama* having possessed the soul, prevaleth in intoxication. When the *Tama* and *Raja* have been overcome, then the *Sattwa* appears. When the *Raja* and *Sattwa* [are suppressed], the *Tama* [becomes prominent] ; and when the *Tama* and *Sattwa* [disappear] the *Raja* prevails. . . . The love of gain, industry, and the commencement of works ; intemperance and inordinate desire are produced from the prevalence of the *Raja-guna* : whilst the tokens of the *Tama* are gloominess, idleness, sottishness, and distraction of thought. When the body is dissolved, while the *Sattwa-guna* prevails, the soul proceeds to the regions of those immaculate beings who are acquainted with the Most High. When the body findeth dissolution while the *Raja-guna* is predominant, the soul is born again amongst those who are attached to the fruits of their actions. So, in like manner, should the body be dissolved, whilst the *Tama* prevails, the spirit is conceived again in the wombs of irrational beings. . . . Those of the *Sattwa-guna* mount on high ; those of the *Raja* stay in the middle ; whilst the abject followers of the *Tama* sink below." "There is not any thing in heaven or earth, or amongst the hosts of heaven, which is free from the influence of these three *gunas* or qualities." (Ch. xviii.) From the Chaps. xvii. and xviii. we learn that these three qualities affect men in every thing according to their natural tendencies : and thus, in their

desires, propensities, temper, mode of worship, objects of worship, actions, aims, power of understanding, and enjoyments, men are, and can be, only what the 'quality' they possess allows and compels them to be.

b. The natural result of these qualities is to subject men to an entire *ignorance* of what they really are. In spite of the fact that Brahma is every thing, and every thing is Brahma (*samasti byasti*), men draw 'distinctions' between themselves and him, and between him and the universe in general. "That supreme light, to whom the Shástras say we must come, is the Supreme Brahma, endowed with freedom from faults and other qualities; and this is the true form of the living soul, reckoned different from him by illusion. For so long as the human soul, retaining the ignorance belonging to human reason and possessing duality, does not obtain that firm and ever-seeing soul, so that it can say *I am Brahma*, so long the condition of the living soul (as a separate soul) endures." . . . 'How then, says an objector, can that nature and divine light in us be obscured? The glitter of gold is hidden by other things, but when they are removed, returns to its original splendour. The stars, obscured by the glory of the sun, shine at night by their own light: but in no way can that divine light be extinguished or obscured, because it is superior to all lights.' . . . SANKAR replies; "The soul cannot be united to that light because it does not yet possess 'wisdom:' the light itself is not diminished, but we want a discerning power to perceive its glory."* This ignorance, which vitiates all his opinions and views, leads man continually into the *error* of 'improper attribution' [*adyádrop*]; i. e. of falsely ascribing to persons and things qualities which they do not possess. "Just as a man may, from gloom or distance, attribute to a piece of rope, the quality of being a snake, so has the individual soul, under the influence of the glooms of ignorance, created for itself an outward world. From this cause it has erroneously considered that the gross body in

* Br. Sútras: Sank. p. 80.

which it resides, with all its various organs, the place which supports that body, the ether and other worlds, in fact the whole egg of Brahma (the universe), are 'real things' (*bastu*) instead of unreal (*abastu*) and have their origin in the gross elements. From the same cause it believes that these elements with their three qualities, are separate existences instead of being identical with the 'fourth Brahma,' 'the uninherent soul,' who is their support."* "When the soul is covered by this power (the *ābaransakti*), there arises the impression of dominion, possession, happiness, misery, and other notions connected with material things; as from a rope, which is not perceived to be a rope, the idea of a snake is produced. As the ignorance with regard to a rope, produces by its own power (the idea of) a snake and similar things upon a rope which is not perceived to be a rope, so ignorance, by its power, shows all the expanses of the universe upon the soul which is covered by ignorance. This power is called the illusive power."† The same fact is asserted again and again in the Br. Sūtras, that man labours under 'ignorance' of his own true nature; and that from that ignorance alone all the variety of names and forms in the universe has arisen. This ignorance is compared not only to the illusion which turns a rope into a snake, but to the mirage in the desert; or to the image of the sun in water; however these objects may succeed in deceiving men for a time, they are unreal after all‡.

c. The consequence of this ignorance is that the soul is led into various errors, in all of which, however, it is still under the influence of the supreme. "Blind in the darkness of ignorance, the soul is guided in its actions and fruition, in its attainment of knowledge and consequent liberation and bliss, by the supreme ruler of the universe, who causes it to act conformably with its previous resolves: now, according to former purposes, as then consonantly to its yet earlier pre-

* Vedānta Sār. 62. 64.

† Vedānta Sār. pp. 21, 22. Br. Sūt. III. 2. 27.

‡ Sank. on the Katha: also Br. Sūt. III. 2. 26-30. p. 261.

dispositions, accruing from preceding forms with no retrospective limit: for the world had no beginning. The supreme ruler makes the individuals act relatively to their virtuous or vicious propensities. As the same fertilizing rain-cloud causes various seeds to sprout multifariously, producing diversity of plants according to their kinds."* [II. 3. 41-42]. "The man who is born with divine destiny is endued with the following qualities: exemption from fear, purity of heart, self-restraint, &c.: whilst those who come into life under the influence of the evil destiny are distinguished by hypocrisy, pride, presumption, anger, harshness of speech and ignorance. . . . They know not what it is to proceed in virtue or recede from vice; nor is purity, veracity, or the practice of morality to be found in them. They say that the world is without beginning, and without end, and without an *Iswar* (a lord); that all things are conceived by the junction of the sexes; and that love is the only cause. These lost souls, and men of little understandings, having fixed upon this vision, are born of dreadful and inhuman deeds for the destruction of the world. They trust to their carnal appetites, which are hard to be satisfied; they are hypocrites, and overwhelmed with madness and intoxication. Because of their folly they adopt false doctrines, and continue to live the life of impurity. They abide by their inconceivable opinions, even unto the day of confusion, and determine within their own minds that the gratification of the sensual appetites is the supreme good. Fast bound by the hundred cords of hope, and placing all their trust in lust and anger, they seek by injustice the accumulation of wealth, for the gratification of their inordinate desires. They say; 'This, to-day hath been acquired by me. I shall obtain this object of my heart. This wealth I have and this shall I have also. This foe have I already slain, and others will I forthwith vanquish. I am *Iswar*, and I enjoy; I am consummate, I am powerful and I am happy: I am

* Colebrooke, I. 354.

rich, and I am endued with precedence amongst men; and where is there another like me: I will make presents at the feasts and be merry.' In this manner do those ignorant men talk, whose minds are thus gone astray. Confounded with various thoughts and designs, they are entangled in the net of folly; and being firmly attached to the gratification of their lusts, they sink at length into the *Hell* of impurity."* — "What happiness can he enjoy who hath no rest? The heart which follows the dictates of the moving passions carrieth away his reason, as the storm the bark in the raging ocean."

To free it from this gross ignorance and debased views, many *transmigrations* are in the ordinary course of things necessary. The great object to be aimed at, throughout the history of the individual soul, is its ultimate restoration to its original form. In the ordinary way its frequent entrance into new bodies will aid the destruction of its ignorance; and transmigration is therefore spoken of as a necessary part of every one's history. "Injustice cannot be attributed to Brahma, because some are happy, some miserable, and some are both. Every one has his lot in the world according to his merit in a former stage of the universe. So the rain cloud distributes its rain equally; but the plants vary according to the seed whence they spring." [Br. Sút. II. 34—37]. "As a man casts off his old garments and puts on new ones, so the soul having quitted its old mortal frame, enters into another which is new." "Both I and thou, [said Krishna to Arjun] have passed many births: mine are known to me, but thou knowest not of thine." "The wise man proceedeth not unto me until after many births." The general course of such transmigrations is thus described by the *Sútras*. "The soul, on leaving the body which it has occupied, ascends to the moon; there clothed with an aqueous body it receives the recompense of its actions, and then returns to a new body bringing with it the influence of its former deeds. When about to revisit the world, it leaves its watery frame in the moon and comes down, through

* Bhag. Gitá. Ch. XVI. "Of good and evil destiny." (প্রকৃতিভেদ)

vapours, in the rain; thence it gets into vegetation, and thence into an animal embryo." (iii. 22. 27.) More will be mentioned on this subject in our next chapter. Such is the dark and gloomy state of man in relation to Brahma.

2. The *process of restoration*, of which transmigration forms a part, may be shortened by another and divinely appointed plan: viz. a course of proper instruction that shall enlighten and purify the mind of him who undertakes it. To teach this is the special object of the Vedánt: by it the qualified Hindu will be made aware of the 'errors' under which his mind is labouring, of the way in which they have arisen, and of the mode of their removal. He will be shewn what he really is, that by a proper course of effort, he may be delivered from what he is not.

It has already been shewn, that previous to a study of the Vedánt and a practical performance of its precepts, a scholar must make careful preparation: he must become 'qualified' [*adhikári*] and may then go to a proper master, who will instruct him in all the mysteries of the science. All however will not be able to undertake the same course. The science therefore has been divided into two branches: one the *inferior*, the other, *superior*: a distinct routine is appointed to each: and both conduce to the accomplishment of the great *object* of the science, the re-union of the individual soul with Brahma; though the higher branch is much more efficacious than the inferior, and its results follow more speedily.

a. The *inferior* is no other than the doctrine of the *Purbba Mimánsa*, viz. that liberation is to be obtained by *religious merit*, by the fruit of sacrifices and other appointed rites. The *higher* is the attainment of 'wisdom' [*gyán*], of the knowledge of Brahma, through the Vedántic precepts. These two are pithily contrasted by Sankar Achárjya; "*Dharma-gyán* receives the fruit of happiness, but looks to the observance of rites; *Brahma-gyán* receives the fruit of perfect liberation and has regard to no other rule:" (Br. Sút. i. 1.)

The mode in which the *inferior* is carried out need not be

here specified at any length. It is only required to show clearly that the rites and ceremonies enjoined by it are acknowledged as a distinct (though preparatory) part of the Vedánt system. Evidence of this may be found in all the authorities we have named. "The inferior has for its objects the fruits of the performance of meritorious works and their opposite." "They desire to know that soul by sacrifice." "What any accomplishes by 'knowledge' is much more efficacious than that done by faith and revelation." "All this effort and knowledge of which we have spoken, rightly observed, aid the man who desires liberation and is free from worldly longings, in purifying his nature : and if he is in want of that knowledge but has the desire, still all the works enjoined in the Vedás and other Shástras are efficacious only in the acquirement of salvation by the southern road." The *Vedánta Sár* teaches the same thing. As however the ceremonies help only to purify the mind and prepare it for a 'higher' course of instruction and effort, their reward is merely temporary. Still it is *sure*, and the mode of acquiring it is really acceptable to the supreme. "When in ancient times BRAHMA, the lord of the creation, had formed mankind and at the same time appointed his worship, he spoke and said : 'With this worship pray for increase, and let it be that on which ye shall depend for the accomplishment of all your wishes. With this remember the gods, that the gods may remember you. Remember one another, and ye shall obtain supreme happiness. The gods being remembered in worship, will grant you the enjoyment of your wishes. He who enjoyeth what has been given to him, by them, and offers not a portion of it to them, is even as a thief. Those who eat not but what is left of the offerings, shall be purified of all their transgressions. Those who dress their meat but for themselves eat the bread of sin. All things which have life are generated from the bread which they eat. Bread is generated from rain; rain from divine worship; and divine worship from good works. Know that good works come from BRAHM,

whose nature is incorruptible ; wherefore the omnipresent BRAHM is present in the worship.' ” (Gítá iii. p. 45.)

Again, “ Janaka and others have obtained perfection even by works. Thou shouldst also observe what is the practice of mankind, and act accordingly. The man of low degree, followeth the example of him who is above him, and doeth that which he doeth. I myself, Arjun, have not, in the three regions of the universe, any thing which is necessary for me to perform, nor any thing to obtain which is not obtained ; and yet I live in the exercise of the moral duties. If I were not vigilantly to attend to these duties, all men would presently follow my example. If I were not to perform the moral actions, this world would fail in their duty ; I should be the cause of spurious births, and should drive the people from the right way. As the ignorant perform the duties of life from the hope of reward, so the wise man, out of respect to the opinions and prejudices of mankind, should perform the same without motives of interest. He should not create a division in the understandings of the ignorant, who are inclined to outward works. The learned man by industriously performing all the duties of life, should induce the vulgar to attend to them.” (p. 46). “ Some devout attend to the worship of the *Devatas* ; others, with offerings, direct their worship to Brahma in the fire ; others sacrifice their ears and other organs in the fire of constraint ; whilst some sacrifice sound and the like in the fire of their organs. Some again sacrifice the actions of all their organs and faculties in the fire of self-constraint, lighted up by the spark of inspired wisdom. There are also the worshippers with offerings, and the worshippers with mortifications ; and again, the worshippers with enthusiastic devotion ; so there are those the wisdom of whose reading is their worship, men of subdued passions and severe manners. Some sacrifice their breathing-spirit and force it downwards from its natural course ; whilst others force the spirit which is below, backward with the breath, and a few with whom these faculties are held in great esteem, close up the door of

each ; and there are some who eat by rule ; who sacrifice their lives in their lives. All these different kinds of worshippers are, by their particular modes of worship, purified from their offences. He who enjoyeth but the *Amrita* which is left of his offerings, obtaineth the eternal spirit of BRAHM the Supreme. This world is not for him who doth not worship ; and where, O Arjun, is there another fit for him ? A great variety of modes of worship like these are displayed in the mouth of Brahma ; [i. e. in the Vedas].” “Whatever image any individual is desirous of worshipping in faith, it is I alone who inspire him with that steady faith ; with which he being endued, endeavours to render that image propitious and at length he obtaineth the objects of his wishes, as it is appointed by me :” (Ch. vii.) “Those who worship the Devatás go unto them ; and those who worship me alone go unto me.” “They also who serve other gods with a firm belief, in doing so involuntarily worship even me. I am he who partaketh of all worship and I am their reward.” “I accept and enjoy the holy offering of the humble soul, who in his worship presenteth leaves and flowers, and fruit and water unto me ;” (Ch. ix. p. 81). No clearer proof can be needed than these passages afford, that IDOL-WORSHIP is *distinctly recognised* by the Vedánt authorities, as *beneficial to the worshipper and acceptable to the Supreme*.

Another mode of deliverance taught by the *Bhagavat Gítá*, is the supreme efficacy of FAITH. This must be considered as connected with the branch of the process we are now speaking of. It is not inculcated in the *Sútras*, nor in the *Vedánta Sár*. But in the *Gítá* it is enforced again and again. “A man also, being engaged in every work, if he puts his trust in me alone, shall by my divine pleasure obtain the eternal and incorruptible mansions of my abode.” (Ch. xviii.) “He who serveth me alone with due attention, having overcome the influence of the ‘qualities,’ is formed to be absorbed in Brahma the supreme.” (Ch. xiv.) “Those who serve me with constant zeal and are endued with steady faith, are

esteemed the best devoted." (Ch. xii.) "Place then thy heart on me, and penetrate me with thy understanding; and thou shalt, without doubt, hereafter enter unto me..... Shouldst thou find thyself unequal to that task, put thy trust in me alone." (Ch. xii.) "I am not to be seen, as thou hast seen me, even by the assistance of the Vedas, by mortifications, by sacrifices, or by charitable gifts: but I am to be seen, to be known in truth, and to be obtained by means of that worship which is offered to me alone." (Ch. xi.)

b. The *superior* mode of obtaining 'liberation' from the ignorance in which men have been born, is that which the Vedánta system specially develops and teaches. As 'ignorance' of Brahma is the disease; so 'wisdom' in relation to Brahma (*Brahma-gyán*) constitutes the cure, a cure that may be made perfect and eternal. By this 'wisdom' is meant the true and complete understanding of what Brahma is, and of man's relation to him. The soul has been accustomed to consider itself independent, a separate being, a voluntary agent; living in a body formed for its use from material substances; and residing upon a world and amidst a universe, external to itself and also formed of matter. These views have sprung from its ignorance, by 'improperly attributing' to these varied objects qualities which they do not really possess. But under the instruction of teachers learned in the science, the scholar after various processes comes to know that all this is Brahma; that he himself is Brahma; that his body is not what he formerly took it to be, but a form of Brahma: that the universe is Brahma and has no existence apart from him; that his passions, pleasures, pains, are all unreal; his thoughts unreal; his relations in life unreal; and that there is but ONE REAL thing in the universe: 'THIS IS HE; the immortal, fearless Brahma.' Those who deny that the system is Pantheistic, cut out from it the very assumption on which it is based; and the consummation which it is intended to secure. An examination of the 'four means,' as taught by the *Vedánta Sár*, will shew that this

view of *Brahma-gyán* can alone be the correct one. It is the full development of those 'means' that makes that 'wisdom.' "When the teacher has by means of the 'improper attribution' and 'abstraction,' (*apabád*) purified the two terms (of the 'great sentence') *that* and *thou* ; and the meaning of the infinite one has been explained by the great sentence, there is produced in the mind of the 'qualified person,' the act of the understanding, formed by the form of the infinite Brahma, viz. I am the eternal, pure, omniscient, free, true, self-existent, ever-blessed, infinite Brahma, without a second. This act together with the likeness of the omniscient being, by making the all-pervading, undivided, unknown, supreme Brahma its object, destroys the ignorance with regard to him."* This is the great point of the whole science : the man who knows the Vedánta knows Brahma. So say the Sútras and all the authorities.

The mode of attaining this wisdom is very systematically stated in the *Vedánta Sár*. The scholar must have implicit faith in his teacher. "Faith is a belief in the words of the master and of the Vedánta ; and this faith [*Sraddhá*] is included in the 'four means' by which the qualified scholar prepares himself for further instruction. Thus endowed, he must receive the master's instructions according to special rules. The four acts enjoyed are the following. (1.) *Hearing*, that is, fixing in the mind the opinion of the Vedánta respecting Brahma : by regarding the commencement and end of the passages which speak of him ; by constant practice and repetition : by excluding other arguments than those advanced ; by regarding the fruit of knowledge ; by praising the subject explained and by demonstration of it. (2.) *Attention* to Brahma by the demonstrations offered concerning him. (3.) *Contemplation* of him in the way taught. (4.) *Meditation* ; especially meditation which regards no difference between him who knows the object of knowledge and the knowledge itself. This kind is especially termed '*Yog*' and

* *Vedánta Sár*, p. 79.

really includes all the processes enjoined under the *higher method* of obtaining the end of the Vedánt absorption into Brahma. It includes *refraining* from injury, from lying, from stealing, and disobedience to the teacher ; also *sitting in a peculiar posture*, as in the form of a lotus, and *suppression of the breath*. It also excludes *listlessness, absence of mind, passion*, and propensity to pleasure. When these are really attended to, the student becomes immovable in mind, "like a lamp protected from the wind." Descriptions of the 'wise man' [*gyáni, yógi*], in the *Bhagabat Gítá* are endless. "The worship of spiritual wisdom is far better than the worship with offerings of things. In wisdom, every work is to be found without exception. Seek then this wisdom, with prostrations, with questions, and with attention ; that these learned men, who see its principles, may instruct thee in its rules. Although thou wert the greatest of all offenders, thou shalt be able to cross the gulf of sin with the bark of wisdom." (Ch. iv. p. 55.) "The learned behold HÍM alike in the reverend bráhmaṇ, perfected in knowledge, in the ox, and in the elephant : in the dog, and in him who eateth of the flesh of dogs." (Ch. v.) "The man who 'keepeth' outward accidents from entering his mind, and his eyes fixed in contemplation between his brows ; who maketh the breath to pass through both his nostrils alike in expiration and inspiration, . . . shall obtain me and be blessed." (Ch. v.) "To the *Yogi*, gold, iron and stones are the same." (Ch. vi.) "The *Yogi* plants his seat firmly on a spot that is undefiled. . . . There he should sit with his mind fixed on one object alone in the exercise of his devotion for the purification of his soul, keeping his head, his neck and body, steady without motion, his eyes fixed on the point of his nose, looking at no other place around. This divine discipline, O Arjun, is not to be attained by him who eateth more than enough, or less than enough ; neither by him who hath a habit of sleeping much, nor by him who sleepeth not at all. . . The *Yogi* of a subdued mind, thus employed in the exercise of his devotion, is compared to

a lamp, standing in a place without wind, which waveth not." (Ch. vi.) "He is my beloved servant, who is the same in friendship and in hatred; in honour and in dishonour; in cold and in heat; in pain and pleasure; who is unsolicitous about the events of things; to whom praise and blame are as one." (Ch. xii). "*Gyán* (wisdom) inculcates exemption from attachments and affection for children, wife and home: and a dislike to the society of man, &c." (Ch. xiii). Such are the nature and influence of the 'wisdom' which alone acquires a true understanding of the nature of the supreme.

There is one ceremony, often referred to in the Hindu Shástras, which accompanies both divisions of the Vedánta; which is one of the oldest ceremonials among the Hindus, and is most influential even in the present day. It is the repetition of the great syllable OM. The *Sútras* declare that this syllable has three elements of meaning; and according to the sense in which the syllable is contemplated, will be the efficacy. If meditation is fixed only on one of these senses, the soul is confined to this earth: if upon two, it gains the second degree of happiness; if upon all three, then, like a serpent which has cast its skin, it ascends to Brahma. According to the *Bhagabat Gítá* also, the *Yogi* must, in the exercise of devotion, "repeat in silence OM, the mystic sign of Brahma." "OM, TAT, and SAT, (ॐ तत् सत्) are the three mystic characters used to denote the Deity. OM precedes the sacrifices and ceremonies ordained by law. TAT is pronounced by those who long for immortality, without looking for the rewards of merit. SAT is applied to attention in worship, zeal, and deeds of charity. The deeds performed for TAT are esteemed to be Sat." (Ch. xvii. p. 122).

3. It only remains to describe the *various effects* of these processes, and our outline of the system will be complete. On this point the *Sútras* in the fourth book speak fully and clearly. We find that all who give their mind to the study of the system, with the desire to enjoy its fruit of absorption, obtain reward: but this reward has *three*

degrees according to the degree of wisdom obtained by the worshipper.

a. The *highest* degree includes those who obtain a *perfect* knowledge of the supreme. The moment the soul knows Brahma, it overcomes death and sins, and, freed from all earthly loves and desires, turns itself to its own nature. Not only can it sin no more, but the penalty of the greatest crimes is blotted out and even the merit of good works is despised; [iv. 1. 13-19]. "The destruction of all works (good and bad) is known in the knowledge of Brahma." "Men who are endued with true wisdom are unmindful of good or evil in this world." [*Gītā*, Ch. ii.] "At death he passes by both merit and demerit; for bondage is the same whether the chains be gold or brass."* The condition of the Brahma-gyāni while he still lives on the earth [*jībanmukta*] is well described in the last paragraph of the *Vedānta Sār*. "Though during the time he is awake, he, by his body, which is like a vessel of flesh, blood, &c.; by his senses, which are like vessels of blindness, bluntness and unfitness; and by his mind, which is the vessel for the sensations of hunger, thirst, grief and error; performs the works which arise from the impulses of his former desires, and enjoys the fruits of his undertaking, (which fruits are no obstacles to true knowledge;) still he does not actually perform or enjoy them; since he has destroyed the whole creation of ignorance, as a person who knows a thing which he perceives to be an illusion of his senses, does not actually believe in its reality, though he may perceive it. He is (says the *Srūti*) like one, who seeing does not see and hearing does not hear."

Upon the death of the body, the soul of him who has obtained the knowledge of Brahma proceeds immediately to a re-union with the Supreme, in whom it is *entirely absorbed* (*līna*). [iv. 2. 15]. "Henceforth he is never separate from Brahma." "All his faculties and the elements of his subtile body are absorbed completely and absolutely. The

* Sankar on the *Sūtras*.

name and form equally cease.” “The soul having retired to its proper place, the heart, the summit of that organ sparkles and illuminates the passage by which it will pass away.” Here the solar rays meet it, night or day ; summer or winter ; as long as the body lasts these rays are present and in contact with it. By these rays it reaches the sun. Being destitute of faculties and animated organs, it is like a blind man : and is therefore conducted across the different regions of the universe by their presiding divinities to the residence of the supreme Brahma. “The soul of him who has the most perfect knowledge and therefore gets ‘liberation’ (*mukti*), goes to the supreme light, and is identical with him, as pure water, absorbed in a limpid lake is exactly in every thing conformed to it.” Other passages assert the same fact, declaring in the strongest terms that the **IDENTITY** is complete and final. “So long as the mind is subject to fear, so long it does not believe itself eternal ; so long it wishes to defend itself, but when it knows itself eternal and undivided then against whom and what can it desire to defend itself?”* “He who knows Brahma think thus, ‘I am Brahma ; a thing different from him who was formerly thought to act and enjoy ; which in the three times by its own nature neither acts nor enjoys ; it was not I who formerly acted and enjoyed, neither do I now, nor shall I do so in the future ; this is liberation. If there were no cessation from works to be done, there would be no liberation.’” “No egress from the body or migration can fall to him **WHO KNOWS BRAHMA AND BECOMES BRAHMA** the pervader of all things, whose desires and works are blotted out.” From the Gita innumerable passages to this effect might be quoted. “The *Yogi*, who believes in unity and worships me present in all things, dwells in me in all respects even whilst he lives.” (Ch. vi.) “He who conceiveth the supreme, &c. to be even as I have described them, *whatever mode of life he may lead*, is not again subject to mortal birth.” (Ch. xiii.) “A man being possessed of this

* Sankar on the Katha Upanishad.

confidence in the supreme, goeth not astray. Even at the hour of death, should he attain it, he shall mix with the incorporeal nature of BRAHMA." (Ch. ii.)

b. A lower degree of reward is obtained by him, who, by various religious exercises and an incomplete study of the system, has obtained a less perfect 'wisdom.' The souls of such are conveyed at death across the regions of the universe to the heaven of Prajapati or Brahma. There they are endowed with very great power; a power somewhat analogous to that of Brahma, though it will serve only for enjoyment, not for action. They can summon the *pitris* at pleasure and exercise other super-human faculties. They are independent and can assume many bodies or one, "as a lamp can nourish more than one wick." The final end of all will be absorption into Brahma, though it would seem that even the highest of this class must be born again in a new kalpa of Brahma. There seems however a strange condition attached to the happiness of this class. It is thus stated by the Bhagavat Gitá: "Those holy men, who are acquainted with Brahma, departing this life in the fiery light of day, in the bright season of the moon, within the six months of the sun's northern course, go unto him. But those who depart in the gloomy night of the moon's dark season, and whilst the sun is yet within the southern path of his journey, ascend awhile into the regions of the moon and return to mortal birth." (Ch. viii.) This condition is mentioned in the Vedas; the Sûtras declare that those who attain perfect wisdom are not affected by it.

c. A lower degree of reward is obtained by another class: those who have acquired lower merit. They go to the heaven of Indra, where they remain till that merit is expended, when they are born again. "The followers of the three Vedas being purified of their offences address me in sacrifices and petitions for heaven. These obtain the region of Indra, in which heaven they feast as on celestial food and divine enjoyments; and when they have partaken of that spacious

heaven for a while in proportion to their virtues, they sink again into this mortal life." [Ch. ix. p. 80.]

One special consolation is reserved for both the latter classes. It is that though they may enjoy and expend the fruits of their merits, the good influence of those merits will still remain; and thus from birth to birth, they will rise higher in the scale of holy men, until the final end is reached. "As the arrow which is launched stops not till it finishes its course; and as the potter's wheel stays not till the speed imparted to it has passed away," so the good works which have begun to take effect are not annulled. Hence all kinds of ceremonies are useful even in the special end at which the Vedánt aims. The son succeeds to the works of his father and their good fruit is continued till absorption is arrived at.* "A man whose devotions have been broken off by death, having enjoyed, for an immensity of years, the reward of his virtues in the regions above, at length is born again in some holy and respectable family, or perhaps in the house of some learned yogi. . . . Being thus born again, he is endowed with the same degree of application and advancement of his understanding that he held in his former body, and here he begins to labour again for perfection in devotion." (Ch. vi.).

Such is a brief outline of the Vedántic system, according to its ancient authorities, the *Sútras* and *Bhagabat Gitá* of VEDA VYÁSA. By numerous quotations we have endeavoured to let the great philosopher speak for himself and describe his system in his own words. On some of the inferior points we have also extracted largely from the *Vedánta Sár*. These sources of Hindu philosophy teach; that there is but one real, existent Being, the supreme creator of the universe: that all the productions and forms of matter in that universe are only emanations from him: that man also both in body and mind is but a product of the sole entity; that whatever appears to prove him an independant and separate being is

* Br. Sút. iv. 1. 14.

the offspring of illusion and ignorance; that to that illusion and its imaginations alone the whole universe owes its existence: that the effect of that illusion on man is to fill him with gloom and doubt, and to lead him to actions called sinful and wicked: and that by peculiar processes this gloom may be removed, he may recognize his real nature and thenceforth lose that individuality which seems a prime element in his being. As a system of philosophy the Vedánt is certainly curious: but as a system of religious truth, every enlightened mind must consider it full of dangerous error. Had the purpose of this little work been to regard it in the former of those aspects only, we should have added much to our sketch and made our outline clearer and more full. But as it is the religious bearings of the system we are discussing, our space will not allow this extended enquiry. We should have dwelt also on the *history* of the system and the changes it has undergone. In the outline above presented, the three authorities quoted fully agree: the chief doctrine especially is most clearly stated by each and all. But on some points, and chiefly on the prominence given to the individual doctrines, they in a measure differ. Thus for instance, in the Sútras and Gitá, while Pantheism is taught most plainly, it is not shown how the doctrine can be consistent with that notion of individual existence, of which every man is conscious. The difficulty is carefully passed over: but it is precisely this difficulty which the later system (as seen in the Vedánta Sár) endeavoured to meet. "The whole universe is Brahma;" said Vyása, 'man is Brahma;' and having proved his point as he thought, left it there. An after-age replies; We are conscious that we exist separately and independently. How can this be, if we are Brahma? The later philosophy, taking up a hint or two in the Vedas, answers; "Your supposed consciousness is an error and illusion. Man is ignorant: man is blind: he attributes to himself and to the universe around him an existence purely imaginary:" and from this point it starts in the process of restoration. While therefore we

agree with Mr. Colebrooke, that the doctrine of *Máya* or illusion is found not in the *Sútras*, but in the later age of the *Vedánta*, we cannot but consider it a most natural and legitimate deduction from the pantheistic doctrines of earlier times. Either pantheism is false ; or man's consciousness is a delusion. The *Vedántists* accept the latter alternative. Had time and space allowed, it would have been curious to trace the points of agreement between the *Vedánt* of *Vyás* and the philosophies of Europe ; and to shew how in numerous points, the Eleatic School ; the Eclectic school of Alexandria, under Ammonius and Plotinus ; the school of Spinoza, and (in a few points) the idealism of Fichte, have arrived at conclusions which *Vyás* and his successors reached long before the first Greek philosopher was born. But all such topics we must pass by, and proceed to consider how far the system is to be found in the *Vedas*.

CHAPTER II.

THE VEDÁNTISM OF THE VEDAS.

THAT the *Vedántic* system, in whole or part, should be found in the *Vedas* is readily supposable. For first, its very name implies that it embodies the 'end,' 'scope,' and 'meaning' of the *Vedas*, as derived from the treatises which 'conclude' those sacred books. Secondly ; the *author* of the system is universally declared to have been the Compiler or Editor of the *Vedas* as they now stand, and must therefore have understood their meaning well. On this account, while all the chief systems of Hindu philosophy claim agreement with the *Vedas*, the presumption of that agreement is entirely in favour of the *Vedánt*. Thirdly ; in his greatest work on the subject, the *Sátrik Sútras*, the author continually refers to the *Vedas* ; he quotes their texts in support of his assertions, compares their texts, discusses the various senses

drawn from their texts, rejects false meanings, establishes true ones, and exhibits throughout an anxiety to develop exactly what the teaching of the Vedas really is. Fourthly; the greatest commentator on the Sūtras is also one of the best commentators on the philosophic parts of the Vedas, and appears ever to keep in mind the same end, and to adopt the same plan, as his illustrious predecessor, Vyāsa. Lastly; the very name of *Vedānt* is found in two or three passages of the Vedas themselves implying that at the time of their compilation, such a system was being formed or was already known. It is asserted, however, by recent writers, that the system of Vyās and Sankar is a spurious system: and that the real Vedānta is to be found in the Vedas alone. The question raised seems to us one of name merely: if we find out what those sacred books teach, we can judge for ourselves whether Vyās teaches the same or not, and if there be a difference between him and them, it can be determined by authority, to whose system the name Vedānta properly applies. It is quite possible and even probable, that the two systems will be found almost identical. Be this as it may, laying aside all theories and pre-conceived notions on the subject, we propose to enter on a careful examination of the Vedas themselves, and comparing one book with another, and one text with another, shall endeavour faithfully to describe the doctrines advocated therein.

To accomplish this important task will not require the complete study of the whole of the Vedas. The more philosophic and religious doctrines of these ancient books (or rather of the sages among whom they rose,) have been collected into separate tracts or treatises, distinct from the ritual portions. These tracts are called UPANISHADS. Their number is not quite certain; some writers reckon only 52; others as many as 95. The greater number have been appended to the Atharva Veda; but some are found in the *Brāhmaṇas* of the first three Vedas; a few are included in both: all these Upanishads are authoritative, and enjoy the

respect and weight attached to the Vedas themselves, of which they form a distinct part. Amongst them, those which are considered more definitely and clearly to expound the Vedántic doctrine, that is, the end and aim of the whole of the sacred books, are fifteen in number, in name eleven.* These names are as follows : the MUNDAKA, KATHA, CHHÁNDAGYA, BRIHAD ARANYAKA, AITAREYÁ, TAITTIRIYA, SWETÁSWATARA, TALABAKÁR (or Kená,) BÁJSANEYA (or Isá,) PRASNA and MÁNDUKYA. The *Mundaka*, *Katha*, *Prasna* and *Mándukya* Upanishads form part of the ATHARVA Veda ; of which the *Mundaka* stands first and the *Prasna* second. The *Aitareyá* is from the RIG VEDA, and is composed of four chapters of the second book of the Aitareyá Upanishad, properly so called. The *Brihad Aranyaka* and *Bájsaneya* form part of the WHITE YAJUR. The former is a most voluminous treatise and is comparatively little known : the latter is exceedingly brief. It forms a part of the *Sanhita* of the Veda, and not the *Bráhmaṇa*, as is the case with other Upanishads. The *Taittiríya* is found in the BLACK YAJUR Veda. A most ridiculous story has been invented to account for its name. The *Chhándagya* and *Talabakár* Upanishads belong to the SÁM VEDA, a Veda to which peculiar holiness is attached, from its alleged efficacy in removing sin : the former is one of the longest and most abstruse of the Vedic treatises, though most important for its doctrines : the latter is also abstruse but short. It bears the names of the Kena and Keneshit Upanishad. The *Swetáswatar* belongs to the YAJUR Veda. The recent publication in Calcutta of the whole of these Upanishads has contributed much towards a complete exposition of the system which they contain.

The age in which the Upanishads were written cannot be determined with exactness. The Vedas, of which they form a part, were evidently written by numerous authors and at different periods. The hymns and prayers are naturally set down as the oldest of all, and the philosophical treatises as

* *Bibliotheca Indica*, No. 34. p. v.

somewhat more recent. Native scholars attribute the whole to the time and labour of VEDA VYÁSA. Modern European scholars reckon the Upanishads to be a few centuries later. The age of these treatises matters comparatively little to our present discussion : it is rather to their contents that we wish to draw the attention of our readers.

SECTION I.—*The scope and aim of the Vedic doctrine ; the conditions and mode of Study.*

The term UPANISHAD and its meaning are thus defined by Sankar Áchárjya in his preface to the *Katha Upanishad*. "The word *Upanishad* is formed from the root *Sad*, which has the notion of 'destruction,' 'going,' 'ending,' and which the prefixes *upa* and *ni* precede, while no affix follows. By the word *Upanishad* is denoted the science, which has for its object the being to be known and explained by this book, the *Katha*, which we are about to annotate. 'With what meaning attached can the word *Upanishad* denote a science?' (Answer) ; They, who desire *freedom*, and who having laid aside the wish for visible things and pious works, acquire the knowledge denoted by the word *Upanishad* and hold it firmly, have their ignorance and other defects (the seed of worldliness) removed, slain and destroyed ; and from this meaning (of the root *sad*), the knowledge (they acquire) is called "Upanishad." 'The man who knows him is *delivered* from the mouth of death.' In his comment on the *Mundaka*, he says the same thing : "They who, by their nature and firm faith in a teacher, attain to the knowledge of Brahma, are by that knowledge removed from a multitude of evils ; as being begotten, born, growing old, affected with diseases and the like, or it brings them to the supreme Brahma, or removes and destroys the ignorance which is the cause of worldliness in them, on this account the science is called *Upanishad*." That this is the meaning is evidently shown by the contents of the treatises themselves ; and it will not be inappropriate

in this place to describe the general character and structure of one or two of these works.

The MUNDAKA Upanishad professes to be a discourse or series of instructions delivered by Angiras to Sounaka, in answer to his appeal, "Tell me, illustrious sage, what is that science, by the knowledge of which, this universe is understood?" The treatise is divided into three chapters, each of which has two sections. It is entirely didactic; and describes in various ways and with varied illustrations, the nature and attributes of the supreme: the connection between the universe and him: the way by which men may acquire the knowledge of him; the fruits of that knowledge and so on.

The KATHA Upanishad is divided into two chapters, and six sections (*balli*). It describes a dialogue between Yama and Nachiketá, the son of Vájasravasa. Nachiketá had been devoted by his father to Yama, and arrived at the house of that deity during his absence. The servants informed Yama, on his return, that a Bráhmaṇ had been waiting for him for three days and begged him to offer the usual attentions in order to prevent harm. He did so and promised Nachiketá three favours. Nachiketá asked first, tranquillity for his father's mind; secondly, an account of the sacred fire by which men ascend to heaven; and thirdly, a full explanation of the nature and attributes of the absolute and supreme Brahm. Yama consents to grant them: though the last is bestowed with great reluctance. The doctrine called forth by the third request occupies five out of the six sections of the treatise. This Upanishad is a very important one, but from the frequent ellipses in its language, is somewhat difficult to understand.

The SWETÁSWATARA Upanishad consists of a number of oracular sayings concerning the supreme, the universe, and man, delivered by Swetáswatar to his disciples. They are divided into six chapters or sections; and are strung together without any logical order; the same subject recurring again and again at different intervals. To a scholar accustomed to

continuous trains of thought, these works present very dry and unattractive subjects of study. The wonder is, that any disciple of the Baconian philosophy can regard them as any thing better than an ancient curiosity.

The *object* of the Upanishads is to teach the true doctrine of the supreme, and they themselves contain that doctrine as taught by the great masters of ancient days. Thus the *Swetáswatar* says, "Brahmá knew the supreme Creator, who is hidden in the Upanishads, the most abstruse part of Vedas." "Tell me, oh ! tell me the Upanishad." The teacher replies ; "I have already told you the Upanishad about the supreme : " (*Talab*). The request of Nachiketá to Yama, which is answered in the *Katha*, is 'a solution of doubts about the existence and nature of Brahma.' In the *Talabakár*, the scholar asks, "Who is the creator and governor of all things, both in the mind and body of man," and the Upanishad supplies the answer. "Meditation [*tapa*] is the root of the knowledge of the supreme Spirit ; that Brahma is the theme of the Upanishad : that Brahma is the theme of the Upanishad." (*Swet.* i. 16.) The same is true of the *Chhándogya*, *Mundaka*, and other Upanishads. Thus wherever we look, we shall find that the aim of these treatises is, to describe truly the nature, existence, attributes, and works of the supreme, in order that men, by a proper study of these important subjects, may attain to those superior fruits which that study only can secure.

The *sources* of knowledge are distinctly pointed out. The supreme is *not* to be learned by the exercise of the *senses*, nor by the *reasoning* faculty. "The eye cannot reach him, neither can speech attain him, nor the mind ; we know him not and cannot understand him ; how can any one explain him : he is different from the known and higher than the unknown. He who cannot be conceived by the mind, but by whom the mind is made to conceive, is God. . . . He, who cannot be seen by the eye, but by whom the eye is made to see, is God. To him who thinks him inconceivable, He is

conceivable and he who thinks him conceivable, knows him not.”* “He who is smaller than the minutest atom cannot be learned by reasoning. The knowledge of his doctrine cannot be acquired by reasoning.”† The interpretation of these last passages given by Sankar is ; that the true doctrine concerning THE SOUL is not to be learned merely from the speculations of the mind, because they are not placed on a firm basis ; and of the former extracts he says : the doctrine concerning Brahma is not to be learned from the perception of the senses and other modes of proof. Whence then is it to be acquired ? It is from qualified teachers who themselves learned it from others, by whom it has been handed down from generation to generation. “Not through the instructions of an inferior man can the Being, who is variously thought of, be well known, but after the instructions of one well versed in his doctrine there will be no more room for doubt.” (*Katha*, ii. 8.) “To know Him, (the student) should go with some slips of wood in his hand, to a teacher learned and acquainted with Brahma. To such a disciple, who has subdued his passions and obtained tranquillity of mind, the enlightened guide should communicate accurately the knowledge by which the imperishable, perfect, and true Being may be known.” (*Mund.* i. 2. 13.) In the Upanishads, such teachers are constantly represented as instructing scholars gathered around them. In the Chhándagya we have many mentioned : as Gautam, who teaches Satyakáma ; who next teaches Upakosál. We have also Uddalaka and Swetáketu and Aswápati. In the sixth chapter we have the dialogue between Swetáketu and his father Uddakal. The celebrated Yájnyawalkya taught the WHITE YAJUR with its two Upanishads. Swetáswatara taught to his followers the Upanishad now called by his name. Angirás taught the Mundaka to Sounaka. Many other teachers succeeded them. It is in consequence of the number of such instructors and of the mode in which they taught, that so many varieties (*Sá-khas*) have sprung up in the arrangement of the Vedas or its

* *Talabakár*, 3, 5, 6 & 11. † *Katha*, ii. 8, 9.

interpretation, numbering in all more than eleven hundred. Still this series of teachers is acknowledged to be human ; however excellent their birth or deep their erudition. But the doctrine claims to be superhuman and to be derived by direct succession from the supreme BRAHM himself. Its claim to be considered a divine revelation is presented clearly and distinctly. In the following passage Brahmá is said to be its origin. " Brahmá, the Lord of the universe and the preserver of the world, came into existence before all the Gods. He revealed the doctrine of BRAHM, the most excellent of all knowledge, to his eldest son Atharbba. That doctrine of Brahma which Brahmá revealed to Atharbba, Atharbba communicated to Angirá ; he revealed it to Satyabáha of the race of Bharadváj ; he made it known to Angirás. The great house-holder Saunaka approached Angirás according to rule and said : ' Tell me, O ! illustrious sage, what is that science by the knowledge of which the universe is understood.' The Mundaka Upanishad is the Sage's reply. (*Mund.* i. 1—3.) Again : " This (doctrine) Brahma spake to Prajapati ; Prajapati to Menu ; Menu to created men." (*Chhând.* viii. 15.) In the *Katha*, Yama himself instructs Nachiketá. The SUN instructs Yájnyawalkya ; as the Veda declares : " These pure texts, revealed by the Sun, are published by Yájnyawalkya, the offspring of Vájasani." And to complete the chain the following passages bring us up to BRAHM himself. " He, the all-resplendent, who formerly created Brahmá and placed the Vedas in him, is the displayer of divine knowledge." (*Swet.* vi. 18.) " The SUN," says Yájnyawalkya again, " is BRAHMA ; this is a certain truth, revealed by the sacred Upanishads and in various *Sákhās* of the Vedas."

We enquire next into the *conditions* and *mode* of study. The Upanishads contain *no proofs* that their doctrine is intended *for all classes*. Indeed their dry and abstruse character at once removes them entirely from the sphere of the uneducated. They contain no scheme of religion or way

of salvation intended to elevate the poor, cheer them amid distress and sorrow, make them contented in their poverty and sweeten the bitterness of earthly life with the prospect of a glorious eternity. Even in those early days, learning was reserved entirely for the 'twice-born' and especially for the Bráhmans who even then were the lords of the country of Bhárat. Thus in the *Mundaka*, Angirás, when describing the proper method of studying the great science, says: "The Bráhman should not have a blind fondness for perishable things: to know him, let him go with wood in his hand to a wise teacher;" (i. 2. 12) implying no reserve on behalf of others.

One of the great *qualifications* of the student is the subjugation of his passions and freedom from all those desires which naturally spring up in the hearts of men all over the world. We have already quoted the following passage from the *Mundaka*. "To such a disciple, who has subdued his passions and has attained tranquillity of mind, the enlightened teacher should give the knowledge of the supreme." (i. 2. 13.) "This being can be gained by truth and devotion, by the fulness of knowledge and by the daily observance of rigid and temperate habits." (iii. 1. 5.) "The knowledge of duties preparatory to a future state does not present itself to that childish and foolish being who is engrossed by the fascination of gain." "The vicious, the passionate, the discomposed and those of disturbed minds, gain not the supreme through a mere knowledge of him." (*Katha*, ii. 6, 24). Of this victory over the ordinary love of wealth, Nachiketá as mentioned in the *Katha*, furnishes an illustrious example. Yama says to him: 'Ask from me long-lived sons and grandsons, elephants and cattle, gold and horses, an extensive dominion on earth, and the longest term of life that you can desire for yourself. Desire, if thou knowest any other favour akin to such, together with longevity and wealth. Yea, be the lord of a vast empire, O Nachiketá, and all the wishes that spring up in your bosom will I crown. Ask for any rarities of the

world which you choose, ask for these exquisite damsels with their music and equipages : they are rarely obtained by men. Through these things which I give you, O Nachiketá, make yourself happy ; but ask not from me the solution of the difficult question respecting the existence and nature of God.' Nachiketá replied : ' O Yama, these precarious pleasures rather enfeeble the physical powers of man. Even the age of this universe is comparatively short. Wherefore let dance and song and equipages remain thine. No man can be satisfied with worldly possessions. As I have fortunately beheld thee I may obtain them should I feel desirous ; and I also may live as long as thou exercisest authority ; but the only object I desire is what I have already begged of thee. Why should the mortal of this lower world, subject to disease and death, be delighted with beauty and amorous dalliance, knowing that he, by approaching the celestial beings who are free from disease and decay, can gain superior knowledge ; and knowing too that those sources of pleasure themselves are fleeting though enjoyed even through a long life. Confer on me then, O Yama, the favour of a solution of the doubts about the existence and nature of God for the sake of fruits eternal. No other favour but this difficult one did Nachiketá ask for.* But this is not all. Beside this spirit of self-controul certain ceremonies must be performed, and certain studies carried on, before the high and glorious doctrine of Brahma can be communicated to the scholar by a competent Pandit. Thus Nárad, having solicited instruction from Sanatkumár, and been asked by him what knowledge he had acquired ; replies : " I have learned the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sám Veda, the Atharban which is the fourth, the Itihás and Purán which are a fifth ; and grammar or the Veda of Vedas : the obsequies of the manes, the art of computation, the knowledge of omens, the revolutions of periods, the maxims of ethics. . the art of the soldier, the science of Astronomy, the charming of serpents, &c. all this have I studied, yet do I only know the

* *Katha*, i. 23—29. *Tattwabodhini Patriká*, i. 317.

text and have no knowledge of the soul." (*Chhánd*). Other passages to the same effect are found in other Upanishads: "The means of possessing it, (i. e. the Upanishad) are meditation (*tapa*), control over the senses (*dama*), and good works; its supports are the Vedas and the Vedángas, and truth is its sphere." (*Tal.* 33.) "To those who are pious, observe ritual institutions, are versed in the Vedas, &c. themselves give oblations to fire with reverence, should the doctrine of Brahma be communicated; if the ceremony about the keeping of fire upon the head be performed. What Angirás said before is all true. He who has not performed the above ceremony, should not read this." (*Mund.* iii. 2. 10, 11.) These ceremonies, as part of the due preparation, are not unlike those mentioned in our previous chapter, in the extract from the Vedánta Sár. We trust that all the modern adherents of the Upanishads have, for the sake of consistency, rigidly performed them. Nor should they omit the following: "Making the three upper parts of the body quite erect and withdrawing the mind and senses within the heart; the scholar sitting upon the canoe of Brahma, should cross all torrents following fearfully. Curbing the senses and the appetites, and breathing gently through the nostrils when meditating, the scholar, like a charioteer who has to drive vicious horses, should concentrate his thoughts. On a clean and smooth spot, free from pebbles, from gravel or from scorching sand, where the mind is tranquillized by pleasant sounds, a stream of water and shelter from the heat, with nought to offend the sight, a retreat free from storms, he should apply himself to his task." (*Swet.* ii. 8-10.) With such conditions to be fulfilled we agree with the writer of the *Katha* when he says: "The path of divine knowledge, say the poets, is difficult, and as hard to get along as the edge of a razor." The student will however gain at least one benefit from his austerity. "They say that from the first in his efforts to meditate, (he will enjoy) lightness, health and freedom from greediness: his colour will become fair, his voice melodious, his smell sweet, his secretions scanty." (ii. 13).

Considering the high standard of qualification it can only be expected that very few will ever attain the knowledge offered; and this the Upanishads confess. "Few are they who speak of Him, who is not gained by many for want of opportunities to hear of him; and whom many know not, though they do hear; few are they who understand well the words they have heard from such a teacher; few are they who have been well instructed." (*Kath.* ii. 7.) Even the few who succeed have been destined to it by the object of their study. "He who regulates both ignorance and knowledge is God." (*Swet.* v. 1.) "For He makes him to do good deeds, whom he wishes to bring out of this world; and him he makes to do evil deeds, whom he wishes to bring into the world [by another transmigration.]"* "Whom he chooses, by him can he be perceived, to him the soul makes himself manifest."† Thus aided by divine choice: thus prepared by ritual services, by self-subjugation and by the desire of obtaining the knowledge of the supreme; and thus provided with a competent teacher, learned in the science, the student must place himself at his master's feet, to receive with undoubting faith whatever he may teach; ready if need be, like Indra, (*Chhând.* vii. 11.) to wait patiently a hundred years before that knowledge be given, but resolved to get it in the end.

SECTION 2.—*Of the Supreme Brahma.*

The Upanishads being treatises which have for their end the teaching of the knowledge of Brahma, [*Brahma-bidyâ*], they are of course crowded with passages descriptive of his existence, attributes and deeds. Some of these contain sublime conceptions, expressed in the highest forms of poetic language and illustrated by most striking metaphors. But other passages are puerile and mean: while constant repetitions and thread-bare descriptions, confined to a narrow range of topics, weary the reader without instructing him and lead him to

* *Kaushitak* Upanishad in the Br. Sûtras. † *Mund.* iii. 2. 3.

abandon the study as unprofitable and dry. Of all this any one may satisfy himself, who will read two or three of the longer Upanishads right through. We shall endeavour to extract specimens of these passages in the course of the present section and to arrange them under various heads suggested by a logical view of the subject.

The *existence* of Brahma is considered by the Upanishads as self-evident. It is chiefly on his *attributes* that they dwell and that at considerable length: indeed they have completely exhausted the subject and are obliged to repeat each other's statements. "He cannot be gained by speech, nor by the mind, nor by the eye. How can he be obtained except by the declaration of his existence. He can be known by a belief in his existence and the knowledge of his attributes. The knowledge of his attributes is gained by him who first believes in his existence." (*Katha*, vi. 12, 13.) "He who, while all creation sleeps, is awake and is preparing various enjoyments; He is the immaculate; He is Brahma; He alone is said to be immortal. All beings are under his protection. This is He." (v. 8.) "He is without hearing, touch, form, taste or smell. He is without beginning or end, mighty and supreme. He who knows him thus is delivered from the mouth of death." (iii. 15.) "Whom the whole Vedas declare; of whom all worshippers speak; for whom men subject themselves to religious austerities, Him I describe in few words; He is OM. This OM is Brahma; this OM is the supreme. He who knows this OM gains whatever he desires. This support is the chief support: this support is the best of all. He who knows this support is honoured in Brahma-lók." (ii. 15, 17.) His *size* is thus described. "He is less than the smallest atom; he is the greatest of the great." (ii. 20.) "The one, though motionless, runs swifter than the mind. The senses cannot reach him: He always outstrips them.... Through him do the faculties and vital powers of man operate. That Being who is every where, and is pure, without spot, nerveless, pure, free from defect, all-seeing, all-knowing, supreme and

self-existent, dispenses their requisites to the everlasting times.” (*Bāj.* 4, 8.) “It is he who is to be known, existing in himself through eternity: after him, there remains nothing to be known.” (*Swet.* i. 12.) “Brahma is supreme, supreme and all-excellent; and pervading the body of each, dwells deep in all existences. He alone encompasses and regulates the universe. They who know him become immortal.” “To him there is none high, nor low, nor great, nor small.” “He is the mighty Lord, perfect, the inciter to all good... Without hands or feet he runs and handles: without eyes, he sees; without ears, he hears. He knows all, but they know him not. He is said to be before all perfect, mighty... I have known him, who is without decay, ancient, universal spirit, all-pervading. They who know Brahma assert him to be without birth; they assert him to be eternal.” (*Swet.* iii.) “He is supreme among the gods, the great god, the supreme debta of the debtas, the lord of lords; supreme over all.” “He is the creator and knower of the universe. He is the origin of the soul, the lord of time, knowing all, the lord of matter and of the soul (*khetragya*); the lord of qualities, the cause of liberation, abode and slavery in the world.” [vi. 7, 16.] “The wise know him as one who cannot be seen or felt; he is without tribe or race, without eyes or ears, without hands or feet; eternal, all-pervading, within every thing, most subtle, irreducible, the producer of every thing which is.” (*Mund.* i. 6.) These extracts might have been greatly multiplied; as the attributes of which they speak are repeated again and again in the few Upanishads of which they form a part. In the following extract from the *Taittiriya* he is described as ‘happy.’ “Having produced delight, he became happy: for who would inhale and breathe, unless the joyous ether existed, since he is happy; this enquiry therefore is about the happy one: he who knows the joy of Brahma goes to that happy spirit and fears nothing.” Much more might be said, but we must proceed to another topic.

Brahma, being thus the supreme, is the *cause* of all that

exists apart from himself: its *creator* and sustainer. There was a time when there was nothing in existence beside himself, either apparently or in fact. "When there was neither day nor night, HE was, who is without darkness and is pure goodness alone." (*Svet.* iv. 18). But when the time arrived, he made all. "One deity produced the heavens and the earth." (i. 3). "This deity is the architect of the universe." (iv. 17). Hence he is often termed '*biswasrashtá*,' '*biswayonih*,' 'the creator of all,' 'the producer of all.' Again: '*Sakárana*:' 'HE IS THE CAUSE.' The origin of the universe is thus described in the *Āitareya* Upanishad. (ii. 4.)* "Originally this [universe] was indeed SOUL only, nothing else whatsoever existed, active [or inactive.] He thought; 'I will create worlds:' thus He created these [various] worlds; water, light, mortal [beings] and the waters. That *water* (*ambhas*) is the [region] above the heaven, which heaven upholds; the atmosphere comprises light; the earth is mortal; and the regions below are 'the waters' (*apas*). He thought; 'These are indeed worlds; I will create guardians of worlds.' Thus He drew from the waters, and framed an embodied being. He viewed him; and of that being, so contemplated, the mouth opened as an egg; from the mouth speech issued; from speech fire proceeded. The nostrils spread; from the nostrils breath passed; from breath air was propagated. The eyes opened; from the eyes a glance sprung; from that glance the sun was produced. The ears dilated; from the ears came hearkening; and from that the regions of space. The skin expanded: from the skin hair rose; from that grew herbs and trees. The breast opened; from the breast mind issued; and from mind the moon. The navel burst; from the navel came deglutition; from that death. The generative organ burst: thence followed productive seed; whence waters drew their origin. These deities, being thus framed, fell into this vast ocean; and to Him they came with thirst and hunger: and Him they thus addressed; 'Grant us a [smaller] size, wherein abiding we may eat food.'

* Mr. Colebrooke's translation: *As. Res.* viii. 421—425.

He offered to them [the form of] a cow : they said ; that is not sufficient for us. He exhibited to them [the form of] a horse : they said ; ' Neither is that sufficient for us.' He showed them the human form : they exclaimed, ' Well done ! ah ! wonderful ! Therefore man alone is [pronounced to be] *well formed*. He bade them occupy their respective places. Fire becoming speech, entered the mouth. Air becoming breath, proceeded to the nostrils. The sun becoming sight, penetrated the eyes. Space became hearing and occupied the ears. Herbs and trees became hair and filled the skin. The moon becoming mind entered the breast. Death, becoming deglutition, penetrated the navel ; and water became productive seed and occupied the generative organ. Hunger and thirst addressed him saying ; Assign us [our places]. He replied, You I distribute among these deities ; and I make you participant with them. Therefore is it, that to whatever deity an oblation is offered hunger and thirst participate with them. He reflected ; ' These are worlds, and regents of worlds ; for them I will frame food.' He viewed the waters, from waters so contemplated, form issued ; and food is form which was so produced. Being thus framed, it turned away and sought to flee. The [primeval] man endeavoured to seize it by speech ; but could not attain it by his voice ; had he by voice taken it, [hunger] would be satisfied by naming food. He attempted to catch it by his breath ; but could not inhale it by breathing : had he by inhaling taken it, [hunger] would be satisfied by smelling food. He sought to snatch it by a glance ; but could not surprise it by a look : had he seized it by the sight, [hunger] would be satisfied by seeing food. He attempted to catch it by hearing : but could not hold it by listening : had he caught it by hearkening, [hunger] would be satisfied by hearing food. He endeavoured to seize it by his skin ; but could not restrain it by his touch : had he seized it by contact, [hunger] would be satisfied by touching food. He wished to reach it by the mind ; but could not attain it by thinking : had he caught it by thought, [hunger] would be satisfied by

meditating on food. He wanted to seize it by the generative organ, but could not so hold it : had he thus seized it, [hung-er] would be satisfied by emission. Lastly, he endeavoured to catch it by deglutition ; and thus he did swallow it. That air, which is so drawn in, seizes food ; and that very air is the bond of life. He [the universal soul] reflected ; ‘ How can this [body] exist without me ? ’ He considered by which extremity he should penetrate. He thought, ‘ If [without me] speech discourse, breath inhale, and sight view ; if hearing hear, skin feel and mind meditate ; if deglutition swallow, and the organ of generation perform its functions ; then who am I ? ’ Parting the suture (*simán*), he penetrated by this route. That opening is called the suture (*vidriti*), and is the road to beatitude (*nandana*). Of that soul, the places of recreation are three ; and the modes of sleep, as many ; this (pointing to the right eye) is a place of recreation ; this, (pointing to the throat) is [also] a situation of enjoyment ; this, (pointing to the heart) is [likewise] a region of delight. Thus, born (as the animating spirit), he discriminated the elements, [remarking ;] “ What else [but him] can I here affirm [to exist] and he contemplated this [thinking] person, the vast expanse, [exclaiming ;] ‘ It have I seen.’ Therefore is he named **IT SEEING** (**IDAM-DRA**). It-seeing is indeed his name : and him, being *It-seeing*, they call by a remote appellation, **INDRA** ; for the gods generally delight in the concealment [of their name]. The gods delight in privacy.”

Brahma is the *sustainer* of all. “ By the command of the Imperishable, O Gárgi, the sun and moon stand firm.” [*Brihad Ar.*] “ Him the sun cannot enlighten, nor the moon and stars ; nor can the lightning enlighten him ; much less can fire ; but they all borrow their light from him and shine by his effulgence.”* “ All things in the world proceeded from the supreme and in him they move. . Through fear of him, the fire flames ; through fear of him the sun

* *Mund.* ii. 2. 10 ; also *Swet.* vi. 14, and *Katha*, v. 15. This is evidently a favourite passage.

shines ; and through fear of him Indra, Váyu and death keep in motion." (*Katha*, vi. 2, 3.) "At his bidding the sun rises and sets : on him all the gods live dependent." (iv. 9.) "If God leave the system of man which he pervades ; then what of it can remain. This is he. Not through their vital powers (*prán-apán*, &c.) do mortals remain alive : they live through him, by whom those powers themselves are sustained." (*Katha*, v. 4, 5.) "All rest on that great Being who displays all things, has his seat in all things, and pervades all hearts and all objects visible and unseen." (*Mund.* ii. 2. 1.) "This universe compounded of the perishable and imperishable, of the apparent and the real, the Lord of the universe maintains." (*Swet.* i. 8.) In a dialogue between Yájnyavalkya and his wife Gárgi, the latter asks ; "On what were woven and sewn the heavens, the earth, and the transparent region between them." He replies ; "Upon the ether." "On what then was the ether woven and sewn?" "On the being who is always the same and unchangeable : whom the Bráhmans affirm to be neither thick nor thin ; neither short nor long ;" that is, the supreme Brahma. (*Brihad Aran.*)

He is also the *Destroyer* of creation. "The one destroyer, the being without a second, who dwells in every one and who regulates these worlds with his regulating power, after creating all worlds and sustaining them, destroys them in the end." (*Swet.* iii. 2.) "He is also called the Ruler and Destroyer of the universe." (iii. 4.) "The mighty spirit creates with power innumerable tissues in the universe and then destroying them, creates them anew and reigns as Lord over all." (v. 3.) "His food is even both Bráhmans and Khetriyas, and death is his sauce." (*Katha*, ii. 25.) The time of this destruction is defined as arising periodically at the end of the various *Kalpas* which mark out the progress of time ; when Brahma, according to the necessity of his nature, absorbs all his works into himself, to produce them again when another appointed time arrives.

But the connection between Brahma and his works is even

more intimate than these passages declare it to be. In these we find him the *efficient* and *ultimate cause* of the universe, and of the myriads of objects of which it is composed. There are other passages, however, which shew the relation between him and them to be more direct and simple, declaring him to be their *internal ruler*, their *substantial* and *material cause*; or in other words, that their substance is identical with his own. This is not the first time that such a doctrine has been imputed to the Upanishads of the Vedas: but that doctrine has been denied, in modern days, in the strongest terms by those who profess to follow the Vedas as their guide to religious truth. Our enquiry on the subject has led to the full conviction that the *doctrine is there*, and we shall lay the evidence of it before our readers in three classes of passages; first, those that most strongly *imply* it: secondly, those which contain *illustrations*, that can be explained on no other principle; and thirdly, those which *assert it* in the plainest terms.

We might enter here into the Vedic view of *cause* and *effect* as bearing upon the question, but a mere mention of the subject must suffice. The old doctrine that 'Out of nothing nothing comes,' seems to have required from the first, for the work of creation, something beyond the efficient causation of the Supreme Brahma. In other words, Hindu philosophers have endeavoured to find out the *material* of which the universe was made. The Sánkhyā philosopher finds this in his *prakṛiti* or *pradhān*, the eternal matter that never had beginning: the Nyáyist in his eternal atoms (*anu*). With these philosophers, the Supreme is reckoned only as an *agent* not a creator: and certainly in their frequent use of the word *yoni* [production, birth] and *anu* [atom] the Vedas have in a measure countenanced the idea. What the Vedas themselves more directly *state* on the subject, we shall now see; at all events the *principle* of causation seems certainly that on which the above schools and the Vedānta of Vyás have based their respective theories.

a. No one that reads the Upanishads can fail to notice the continual reference to the supreme Brahma, as *pervading* all things. The fact is asserted again and again in every page, and put in various lights : and as if to shew that this is not an unmeaning assertion, it is declared to be true not only concerning the universe in general, but in reference to its individual parts : which parts are named in detail, great and small. The epithets most commonly employed are *sarbbagatam*, *sarbbabyápi*, *bibhúma* and *antarátmá* : that is, 'moving in all,' 'all-pervading,' 'internal,' 'internal spirit.' In *Mund.* ii. 3 ; *Katha*, v. 9, 10 ; and other passages, we find the expression *Sarbbabhútantarátmá*, 'the internal spirit of every thing which is.' The attribute of 'Omnipresent' is a very different one from this. The following are passages in proof : "This spirit is every where : He is in Swarga : he makes every thing to abide in him : he is in the wind : he is fire : he is in the earth : he is the juice of the moon plant ; he is in the pitcher of the sacrifice : he is in men : he is in the gods : he is in space : he is in the productions of water : he is the productions of earth : he is Om ; he is the productions of mountains ; he is unchangeable and vast."* (*Katha*, v. 2.) "As one fire, entering this world, is seen with the varied forms of various combustible things, even so does the internal spirit of all things assume the varied forms which they assume. He is also without. As one air entering the world is manifested in the various forms of different things, even so does the internal spirit of all things assume the varied forms which they assume. He is also without." [v. 9, 10]. "He goes : he

* The Bengáli comment on this passage, in the Tattwabodhini Patriká i. 450, takes particular pains to point out that the meaning of the passage is *different* from its assertions : and cautions 'those of small intellect' against believing that productions of earth and water, that fire, the juice of plants and so on really ARE *Brahma*. The comment occupies two columns ; but the original speaks for itself. We may add here that No. 43 of the Patriká, in which the passage occurs and which contains complete the *Katha* Upanishad, its Sanskrit text, Sanskrit Tika and Bengáli translation, is an exceedingly valuable contribution to the publication of ancient Hindu literature.

goes not. He is far : He is near : He is in all : He is out of all : He who sees all in that Spirit, and that Spirit in all things, despises not any." [*Báj.* 5, 6]. "He is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech, the life of life, the eye of the eye." (*Tal.* 2). "He is glorious and form-less, the perfect ; he pervades all things without and within." (*Mund.* ii. 1. 2). "As the spokes of a carriage-wheel are to its nave ; and as the arteries are to the heart, so are all the operations of mind to Him who dwells within. He who is all-knowing, and all-wise : whose glory is in the earth, that soul dwells in the ether in the city of Brahma. He dwells in all space. He pervades the mind, and rules over life and body : he is in the body close to the heart." (*Mund.* ii. 2. 6, 7.) "This Brahma is immortal : Brahma is before : Brahma is behind : He is on the right and on the left : above and below. The universe is filled with the extended Brahma." (ii. 2. 11.) "This divine being is on all sides. He was in beings born in former times : he is in beings now in the womb. He was in beings that have been produced : he is in the things that are being produced. He dwells in every living thing : he has all things for his face. To that divinity who is in fire and in water ; who is in the universe, in the earth, in plants and trees, to him be thousands of praises." (*Swet.* ii. 16, 17.) "His face, his head and neck are in all things ; he is within all hearts ; he is all-pervading, and mighty : from him is the all-pervading Siva . . . The perfect one with a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, and a thousand feet, pervades the earth and illimitable universe. That perfect one is every thing which has been, and which will be. In all things are his hands, his feet, his eyes, head, face, ears. He abides in all worlds, over-shadowing them. In this body, a city of nine gates, the all-pervading one enjoys himself : he is the Lord of all worlds, of the fixed and of the moveable." (iii. 11, 14, 15, 16, 18.) "The deity who is one is hidden in all things ; he is all-pervading, the internal spirit of all that is. He is the Ruler, he dwells in all : he is witness . . . and he is without

attributes [*nirgun*]." (vi. 11.) "He who is in this world, is also in that: and he who is in that, is also in this. He is subject to frequent deaths who looks on him as many. The deity is to be gained by the mind: he is not many: he is subject to frequent deaths who looks on him as many." (*Katha*, iv. 10, 11.) These passages may be thought by some to be conclusive of the matter and to shew the Pantheistic doctrine of the identity between Brahma and creation as really supported by Vedic authority. But we shall extract others.

b. That 'the universe is Brahma' is taught by some striking *illustrations*, and taught without reserve. Thus the process of creation and destruction is compared to the work of the *spider* and the economy of the human body. "As the spider spins and gathers back (its thread;) as plants sprout on the earth; as hairs grow on a living person; so is this universe produced from the imperishable nature. By contemplation, the vast one germinates; from him food [or body] is produced: and thence successively, breath, mind, real (elements,) worlds, and the immortality arising from good deeds. The omniscient is profound contemplation, consisting in the knowledge of him who knows all; and from that, the (manifested) vast one, as well as names, forms, and food proceed; and this is truth."* (*Mund.* i. 1. 7-9.) Again the universe is produced from Brahma as *sparks* are from *fire*. "He alone is a real being: as a thousand sparks are emitted from blazing fire: so, beloved, all kinds of beings proceed from that Supreme, and to him again they return.. From him have been produced life, the mind, all the senses, the ether, air, light, water and the earth, the container of all things. Fire is his head: his eyes the sun and moon; the points of direction his ears; his speech the revealed Vedas, the wind is his life; his heart that of the universe; his feet the earth: He is the internal spirit of all that is." (*Mund.* ii. 1. 1, 3, 4.) Again we have an illustration from the *silk-worm*.

* Mr. Colebrooke's translation: *As. Res.* viii. 475.

“Like the silk-worm, the deity has from his own nature wrapped himself up in the universe, sprung from the intellectual pradhán.”* (*Swet.* vi. 10). Again he is compared to a tree. “This eternal universe is like a tree of enormous magnitude, whose root is on high and whose branches are below. He is the illustrious: he is Brahma.” (*Kath.* vi. 1). The same figure is employed in the *Brihad Aranyaka* (As. Res. viii. 447). Yájnyawalkya, discussing with a number of Pandits to whom he proves himself superior, says: “Man is indeed like to a lofty tree; his hairs are the leaves; and his skin, the cuticle. From his skin flows blood, like juice from the bark: it issues from his wounded person as juice from a stricken tree. His flesh is the inner bark; and the membrane, near the bones, is the white substance of the wood. The bones within are wood itself; and marrow and pith are alike. If then a felled tree spring anew from the root, from what root does mortal man grow again, when hewn down by death? Do not say ‘from prolific seed:’ for that is produced from the living person. Thus a tree, indeed, also springs from seed; and likewise sprouts afresh (from the root) after seemingly dying. But if the tree be torn up by the root it doth not grow again. From what root then does mortal man rise afresh, when hewn down by death?” He points out that that Root is Brahma.

Now these illustrations all point to one fact, that the creation is of the *same nature* as its cause. They shew not merely that the universe has an author and that he is Brahma; but they declare beyond this, that the nature of the one is the same as that of the other. The web of the spider; the hairs on the human body; the sparks of a fire; the trunk, branches and leaves of a tree, are all identical in nature with the source whence they physically proceed: the substance, the material is the same. The authors of the above extracts have endeavoured elaborately to shew that the same identity of sub-

* This word denotes the *material* from which the universe was produced.

stance exists between Brahma and the universe ; the universe has the same nature as he, and he therefore, the same as the universe. This is Pantheism.

c. Other passages of the Upanishads *directly assert* the same. “ *All this universe is Brahma :* from him it springs, into him it is dissolved : in him it breathes :* So meditate thou with a calm mind.” (*Chhând.* iii. 14.) “ This divinity is fire ; he is the sun ; he is wind ; he is the moon. This divinity is the morning star ; he is Brahma ; he is water ; he is the Lord of all creatures. Thou art woman ; thou art man ; thou art boys ; thou art girls ; thou goest in the staff of the old man ; thou art all things born ; thou hast the universe for thy face. The birds of blue [plumage] ; those of yellow ; those with blood-red eye ; the womb of the lightning ; the seasons ; the sea [art Thou]. Thou art without beginning and pervadest all ; the universe and all produced things in it [art Thou].” (*Śvetāśwatar Upanishad*, iv. 2, 3, 4.)† “ He, who standing on the earth is different from the earth, whom the earth knows not, whose body is the earth, who rules the earth internally, he is thy soul, the internal ruler, the immortal :” (*Bṛihad Aran.* v.) The same fact is asserted in the same passage concerning water, fire, ether, wind, the sun, the Vedas, &c. Bhṛigu the offspring of Varuna, approached his father saying, ‘ Venerable father, make known to me Brahma.’ Varuna propounded these : namely, food [or body], truth [or life], sight, hearing, mind [or thought], and speech : and thus proceeded : “ That, whence all beings are produced ; that by which they live when born ; that towards which they tend ; and that into which they

* In the pamphlet *Vedāntic doctrines vindicated*, this passage is thus gratuitously paraphrased ; “ [Verily] this universe is [the manifestation of the power of] God.” This is called a translation : and by such translations, attempts are made to remove the very appearance of pantheism from the Upanishads. The reader can judge for himself of the fairness of such proceedings.

† তদেবাগ্নিস্তদাদিত্যস্তদ্বায়ুস্তদু চন্দ্রমাঃ ।

তদেব শুক্রং তদ্বক্ষ তদাপস্তং প্রজাপতিঃ ॥

pass; do thou seek for: that is Brahm. He meditated in devout contemplation: and having thought profoundly, he recognised food [or body] to be Brahma. Again he discovered breath to be Brahma; intellect to be Brahma: and felicity to be Brahma. Such is the science attained by Bhrigu, taught by Varuna and founded on the supreme etherial spirit." (*Taitt. Up.*; As. Res. viii. 454.) "This soul is Brahmá; he is Indra; he is Prajapati [the lord of all creatures]; these Gods are he; and so are the five primary elements, earth, air, the ether, water and light; these and the same joined with minute objects and other seeds [of existence]; and again other [beings] produced from eggs or born in wombs or originating in hot moisture, or springing from plants; whether horses, or kine, or men, or elephants; whatever lives, and walks, or flies, or whatever is immoveable, ALL THAT is the eye of intelligence. On intellect every thing is founded: the world is the eye of intellect and intellect is its foundation. Intelligence is BRAHMA, the great one." (*Aitareya Up.* ii. 6.) According to this pantheistic theory, the universe must be a *portion* if *not the whole*, of Brahma. The creation must be *taken from* him; and on the destruction of all things must *return* to him. It is a fair deduction from the fact to ask, *how much* of Brahma exists in the varied forms of the material universe. *The Vedas acknowledge the justice of the question*, and SUPPLY THE ANSWER. "ALL CREATURES ARE ONE-FOURTH of him; THREE-FOURTHS are immortal in the divine abode." Again; Satyakáma says to his teacher: "I wish, O illustrious sage, to speak to thee of the fourth part of Brahma: tell me about it." He replies: "The east is one particle: and the west: the south is one particle, and the north; this is the fourth part of Brahma, my son, composed of four lesser parts and to it thus declared is there a name." He afterwards learns, that another fourth is made up of the earth, the air, the ether and the sea, and is called, the infinite: fire, the sun, the moon and lightning belong to a third quarter: which is called the bright: and the last fourth embraces life, the eye, the ear

and the mind : this is called, space. Thus in Brahma there are sixteen minor parts. (*Chhánd.* iv. 4—9.) In another passage (vi. 7) the *Chhánd.* asserts ; “ The perfect one is said to have sixteen pārts.” Again ; “ The embodied spirit which hath a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, stands in the human breast, while he totally pervades the earth. THAT BEING IS THIS UNIVERSE AND ALL THAT HAS BEEN OR WILL BE : he is that which grows by nourishment and he is the distributor of immortality. Such is his greatness : and therefore is he the most excellent embodied spirit. THE ELEMENTS OF THE UNIVERSE ARE ONE PORTION OF HIM ; AND THREE PORTIONS OF HIM ARE IMMORTALITY IN HEAVEN. That threefold being rose above [this world] and the single portion of him remained in this universe, which consists of what does, and what does not, taste (the reward of good and bad actions). Again he pervaded the universe. From him sprang Viráj, from whom (the first) man was produced.” (*Yajur Veda* : As. Res. vii. 251.) Again : “ Fire is THAT [original cause] : the sun is that : so is air : so is the moon : Such too is that pure Brahmá ; and those waters ; and that Prajapati [lord of creatures]. Moments proceeded from the effulgent person, whom none can apprehend, above, around, or in the midst ; of him, whose glory is so great, there is no image ; he it is who is celebrated in various holy strains. Even he is the god who pervades all regions ; he is the first-born : it is he who is in the womb : he who is born ; and he who will be produced ; he, severally and universally, remains with all persons.” (*Yajur Veda* ; *Sarvameda* ; As. Res. viii. 431,2.)

The last passage we will quote is from the *Brihad Aran-yaka*. “ This was before soul, bearing the shape of a man. Looking round he beheld nothing but himself. He said first : ‘ This am I.’ Hence the name of ‘ I ’ was produced. Therefore even now a man when called says first, ‘ It is I ; ’ and tells afterwards any other name that belongs to him ; and because he, as the first of all of them, consumed by fire

all the sins, therefore he is called **PURUSH**. He verily consumes him, who before this strives to obtain the state of **Prajápati**, he, namely, who thus knows. He was afraid; therefore man when alone is afraid. He then looked round: since nothing but myself exists, of whom should I be afraid? Hence his fear departed: for whom should he fear, Since fear arises from another. He was unhappy. Therefore no body, when alone, is happy. He was desirous of a second. He was in the same state as husband and wife are when in mutual embrace. He divided this self twofold. Hence were husband and wife produced. Therefore was there only a half of himself, as [one half of a] split pea is [of the whole]. Thus verily has **Yájnawalkya** declared it. This void is thus completed by woman. He approached her: hence men were born. She verily reflected; 'How can he approach me, whom he has produced from himself? Alas! I will conceal myself.' Thus she became a cow, the other a bull. He approached her: hence kine were born. The one became a mare, and the other a stallion: the one a female-ass, the other a male-ass. He approached her; hence the one-hoofed kind were born. The one became a female-goat, the other a male-goat; the one became a ewe, the other a ram. He approached her: hence goats and sheep were born. In this manner he created every living pair whatsoever, down to the ants. He knew; 'I am verily this creation; for I created this all.' Hence the name of creation is derived. Verily he who thus knows, becomes in this creation like him. Then he churned. From his mouth, as the place of production, and from his hands he created fire. Both therefore are inside without hair, for the place of production is inside without hair. Thus they speak there this word; 'sacrifice to this, sacrifice to that:' hence sacrifice to the one or the other god is not proper: He is really this creation: for he verily is all the gods." (1. 4.) Was the creation then a *real* one: or was it done for any great object? The *Swetáswatara* Upanishad gives us an answer. It was done in illusive sport. "Know that the power divine is called *máyá*

and that he who is endowed with this máyá is the supreme.”
(iv. 10.)

The passages above quoted seem to us to teach, without doubt, that the whole universe is Brahma himself, and thus to illustrate in the clearest way the oft-repeated expression *Sarbbam Khalbidan Brahma*; ‘the whole universe is Brahma.’ There is no room here for excuses about *figurative language*. The statements of the Upanishads regard plain facts, and pronounce them in a plain way. They not only state the dogma simply, but describe it in detail; and the last passage from the *Brihad Aranyaka* describes it in a way that does any thing but confer honour on the being of whose work it tells. It may be said however that there are many passages in the Upanishads which speak of Brahma and his creation as separate existences and describe men, gods and animals, as acting for themselves. Most true is this; but not observed for the first time now. Sankar Achárjya pointed it out long since, and when he did so endeavoured to account for it. The perceptions and consciousness of man are quite opposed to the pantheistic theory and will be antagonistic to it down to the end of time. Whatever attempts therefore men may make to establish that theory, the natural consciousness of the independent existence of self, will always develop itself. But this, Sankar Achárjya declares to be quite consistent with the theory. It is *apparently* true, says he, that men are independent of Brahma, but the true doctrine *proves* they are not so. If pantheism *be* taught, we can easily account for the repeated appearance of the opposite theory. But if the Vedas allow *only* the *separate* existence of men and gods, the appearance of *any* pantheistic passages at all, much more of the numerous clearly stated passages we *do* find is, in works professing to come from Brahma himself, utterly unaccountable.

An attentive consideration of the extracts above given and of others like them in the sacred books will shew the reader at once, whence the *Vedánta* of Vyás derived its pantheism.

The same illustrations, the same terms are employed by Vyás, as are used in the Upanishads : and hence without impropriety did he call his theological system, 'the end and aim of the Vedas.' In some respects the doctrine of the latter is not so fully drawn out, to its consequences, as is the system of the former : but the doctrine itself, its basis, its illustrations, its defence, are all there, and it only remained for the philosophers of a later age to carry forward what their predecessors had begun. In confirmation of this view of the Upanishads, I will only quote a short extract from a European scholar, whose duty it has recently been to read the whole of these Upanishads through, with the commentary of Sankar Áchárjya upon them. In No. 34 of the *Bibliotheca Indica*, on completing the publication of the Sanskrit text of these treatises, the Editor, Dr. Roer, says : p. iv. "It will ere long be decided, even to the Hindus themselves, that in a religious view, the Upanishads have no authority ; and if the question of their truth be shifted to the province of philosophy, that the ontological notions of the Upanishads and the systems derived from them, are no more correctly conceived than those of other pantheistical systems, or that that they must be dissolved by the agency of a more exact thinking."

SECTION 3.—*The Universe and its Elements.*

Of the different *worlds* into which the universe is distributed, the Upanishads do not frequently speak. In one passage, we have 'three worlds' mentioned (*Swet.* i. 9) ; alluding probably to *heaven*, *earth*, and the *lower regions*. In *Katha*, i. 12 ; ii. 11, we have *swarga* 'heaven' and *Brahma-lok* spoken of. In vi. 5, three divisions are noted in the Upper Regions, in which different degrees of happiness are enjoyed : these are *Brahma-lok* ; *Pitri-lok* ; and *Gandharva-lok* : again in *Mund.* i. 2, 3, the 'retributive worlds of happiness' are spoken of as seven in number. Other minor divisions of these upper worlds are described in terms similar

to those quoted in the last chapter. We shall hereafter quote a passage on the subject. The various classes into which *organised bodies* are divided are also seldom spoken of with any distinctness. In the *Aitareyá*, they are spoken of as *oviparous*, born in *the womb*, originating from *hot moisture*, and springing from *plants*. They are all spoken of on some occasions as included under two heads, the *fixed* and *moveable*. In the *Mund.* ii. 1. 4: we read; "From him is fire, whose fuel is the sun: from the moon comes rain, and plants upon the earth." In the *Chhándogya*, we find a curious theory about the sun: "That golden man, who is beheld in the sun, with a golden beard, and golden hair, has eyes like lilies and his name is the Rising one." (i. 6). The order in which these bodies are produced somewhat contradicts our pre-conceived notions. Rain comes from the moon; and when it falls and is evaporated, it returns to the moon again. The moon, at the conjunction disappears within the sun and from him is produced again. The sun is born of fire; fire from air. Lightning comes from the rain. (*Aitareya Bráhmaṇa*, As. Res. viii. 417, 8.)

About the *original elements* of the universe, there is less doubt, as they are several times enumerated. "From him have sprung ether, air, light [or fire], water and the all-containing earth." (*Mund.* ii. 1. 3.) "By him preserved this universe, consisting of earth, water, light, wind and mind, remains unchanged." (*Swet.* vi. 2.) "These gods are he; and so are the five primary elements, earth, air, ether, water and light." (*Aitar.*) From these alone the whole of creation has sprung; its various objects having arisen solely from the numerous combinations of which they are susceptible. "He, by his own power, at the time (of creation) combined element with element, in the proportion of one, two, four and eight." (*Swet.* vi. 3.) The order in which they were created is not the same in all passages of the Upanishads. Sometimes one element precedes, sometimes another. The commentator on the *Sútras* gets rid of this difficulty, by saying

that the passages merely intend to point out the creator and not the exact order in which his works were produced.

Among the classes and orders of living beings found in the universe only two claim special notice. Of *men* we shall speak in the next section: in this we shall refer to the *gods*. The gods are often mentioned as forming a part of the universe. Whatever may have been their poetic origin at the beginning, in the Upanishads they are spoken of as real existences. "He produced the gods." (*Swet.* iv. 12.) "He is the Lord of the gods." (iv. 13.) "The sacred sages and the gods devoted themselves to him." (iv. 15.) "He is the great God of gods, and the supreme debta of the debtas." (vi. 7.) "From him have proceeded many gods." (*Mund.* ii. 1. 7.) "Brahmá, the lord of the universe and preserver of the world, came into existence the first of the gods." (i. 1.) "Brahmá was once victorious for the sake of the deities: at his victory those gods boasted." (*Tal.* 14.) "Agni, Váyu and Indra became superior to the other gods." (27.) When Nachiketá sought from Yama the knowledge of the nature and attributes of the supreme, Yama told him: "Formerly even the gods were in doubt about this question." (*Katha*, i. 21.)

The names of some of these deities are mentioned: among them chiefly we find Indra, Váyu, Agni, Rudra, Varuna, Mitra and others. It is asserted however that they constitute but three deities with different titles. "The deities are only three: whose places are the earth, the intermediate region, and heaven; namely, fire, air, and the sun: [AGNI, VÁYU, and INDRA:] Prajapati is the lord of them collectively; other deities, belonging to those several regions are portions of the three gods; but in fact there is only one deity, the GREAT SOUL. He is called the sun, for he is the soul of all beings." (*Nirukta.*) Again it is said: "The lord of creation meditated profoundly on the earth and created the gods: the *Vasus*, the *Rudras*, and *Adityas*." (*Taittiriya.*) "These gods are he." (*Ait.*)

These clear and definite statements of the Vedas themselves preclude our receiving the dogma that these gods are purely imaginary and poetical creations. For they are 'produced ;' they 'boast ;' they 'worship ;' they 'doubt' about religious questions. Besides the Vedas contain proof that they were *worshipped* with sacrifices and offerings : while they allow that such worship is actually *beneficial* to the devotee. Thus in the *Chhândogya* Upanishad, v. a number of sages go to Aswapati to enquire about Brahma. He asks them individually whom they worship. One worships heaven 'as the soul :' another the sun (Indra :) another Váyu : another the ether : another water ; and another the earth. The kingly sage acknowledges and declares to each the *benefits* of his worship, though in the end he points them all to the higher worship of Brahma by contemplation. Yet these worshippers of the *works* of creation and not of its creator, were wise sages ! Again ; " In that solemn sacrifice which the gods performed with him as the victim, spring was the butter, summer the fuel, and sultry weather the oblation. . . . By that sacrifice the gods worshipped this victim : such were primeval deities : and thus did they attain heaven, where former gods and mighty demi-gods abide." (*Yajur*. As. Res. vii. 252.) " It is said that by ritual observances is gained one kind of fruits, and by the worship of the deities another. So have we heard from the wise who told it to us. They who are devoted to both the performance of ritual observances and the worship of the deities, being extricated from death by the former, enjoy, through the latter, a durable divinity." [*Báj*. 10, 11.] Here the benefit of the worship is distinctly declared, as well as the fact of it announced. Can we then doubt, that the existence and worship of other beings than the ONE living God is really a tenet of the Upanishads.

SECTION 4.—Of Man.

Concerning the *body* of man, the vehicle and residence of the soul, but little is said in the Upanishads. It is called in

several instances the *city of Brahma* (Brahmapur); and is said to have 'eleven gates' (*Katha*, v. 1.) Its five senses are constantly recognised; also the five 'vital airs,' (*Mund.* ii. 1. 25.) and five organs of action. Seven orifices are noticed in the head; (*Mund.* ii. 18;) besides the important suture in the plates of the skull, through which the soul is said to enter the body at birth and to leave it at death. There is only one passage worth noting of a decided physiological character; but that is quite sufficient to show the extent of knowledge possessed on the subject in ancient times, and to illustrate the worth of the statement made by the Vedas themselves, that they have come forth from the mouth of Brahma. The passage is as follows: it is spoken by Yama himself, who, 'if he be a god,' certainly ought to have known better: "A hundred and one arteries issue from the heart, and the main among them proceeds through the brain." (*Katha*, vi. 16.) The various *states* in which the body lives during its stay in the world are also little spoken of. Waking, sleeping and dreaming are of course allowed; but a little speculation is indulged in concerning dreams: "When a sleeper sees no dreams, then life in him is simple: speech with all its words goes into the mind: the eye with all forms, the ear with all sounds, the imagination with all its fictions [do the same]: when he wakes up, as sparks come forth from a blazing fire, they return again." (*Kaushit.*) "As those who know not [what is in] the ground may pass over a treasure and not find it, so all creatures daily go (in sleep) to that world of Brahma, but find him not." (*Chh.* viii. 3.) "When a sleeper, perfectly still, sees no dreams, then he departs to those arteries [by which the soul leaves the body]: in him no errors can arise; for he then becomes united to the supreme light." (viii. 6.)

The SOUL of man occupies more attention in the Upanishads: and it is the *liberation* of the soul from the body and from its union with the system of creation, that they have in view. If it be true, as we have endeavoured to shew

that the whole universe is represented as a form of the supreme, it will of course be expected to appear that the *human soul*, amongst other things, possesses a like substance. "He, the universal soul, reflected; how can this body exist without me? He considered by which extremity he should penetrate. He thought; If without me, speech discourse, breath inhale, and sight view: if hearing hear, skin feel, and mind meditate; if deglutition swallow and the organ of generation perform its functions, then who am I? Parting the suture, He penetrated by this route; that opening is called the suture and is the road to beatitude." (*Aitar.* above quoted from the *As. Res.* viii. 424.) "The supreme and the soul have both entered the cavity of the heart, they are as light and shadow." (*Katha*, iii. 1.) "The perfect one, of the size of a thumb only, abides in the centre of the soul: the lord of the past and the future: hence he fears not. This is he. The perfect one of the size of a thumb only, is like a light free from smoke: the lord of the past and the future: he is to-day and will be to-morrow." (iv. 12, 13.*) "In the city of Brahma abides a small water-lily, and in the centre (of the flower) is a diminutive 'ether;' it is now to be asked what is in that ether. . . . As great as is the external ether, so great is the ether in the midst of the heart: both are placed there: the sky and the earth, both: the fire and wind, both: the sun and moon, lightning and stars, all that belongs to him and all that is not his, every thing is placed in it. To this if any one should say; 'But if every thing be placed in this city of Brahma, all creatures and all desires, what would be left if old age should come or happen to it?' It would be answered: That grows not old with the age of the body, nor is destroyed by its destruction: real is the city of Brahma: in it all desires are placed: that soul is without faults, without old age, without death, without sorrow, without hunger and thirst, true in its desires, true in its will." (*Chhând.* viii.)

* In the *Tattwabodhini Patrikâ*, i. 321, the 'size' is attached to the 'heart:' whereas the Sanskrit makes it a quality of the Divinity and says; *Angushthamâtrah PURUSHO.*

This passage has been illustrated at great length by Sankar Achárjya, who decides that the diminutive ether spoken of is Brahma himself: and the 'city of Brahma,' the human body. "By him the mind is produced." (*Swet.* ii. 6.) "The perfect one, the internal spirit, of the size of a thumb, ever abides in the hearts of men." (*Swet.* iii. 13.) "In this city of nine gates the all-pervading god revels." (iii. 18.) "Within the golden sheath of the mind is Brahma, without passion without form." (*Mund.* ii. 2. 9.) "He dwells in the ether in the city of Brahma." (ii. 2. 7.) "Intelligent, a life, dwelling in a body, bright shining, true in its purposes, ethereal spirit, performing all works, possessed of all desires, all smells, all tastes, penetrating every thing, without speech, without wonder, this soul of mine dwells in my heart, smaller than a grain of rice or barley or mustard. . This soul of mine in my heart existed before the earth, before the atmosphere, before the sky, before the worlds." (*Chhánd.* iii. 14.) Again Brahma is said to dwell not only in the heart, but in the eye. "That being who is seen in the eye, he is the Rig [Veda], he is the Sám, he is the Uktam, he is the Yajur, he is Brahma." (*Chhánd.* i. 7.) "That being who is seen in the eye, he is the SOUL (says he;) He is the never-dying, the fearless, he is Brahma:" (iv.) In the *Jabal* Upanishad he is said to be stationed also between the eye-brows. We have already quoted a lengthened passage from the *Chhándagya*, in which man is compared to a tree whose root is Brahma. We will only add an extract from the *Swet.* (v. 9.) "If the end of a hair be divided into a hundred parts and one of these into a hundred, the soul is like any of the *last hundred*. It is made up in countless ways." As a consequence of this consubstantiality with the supreme, the human soul is, like him, *indestructible*. "It is not born, neither does it die; it has not proceeded from any, nor has it been changed into any, nor does it perish when the body dies." (*Mund.* ii. 2-18.*)

* The translation of this passage in the *Tattwabodhini Patriká* cannot be regarded as correct.

Such then is the high origin of man and the nature of his constitution. He is a part and parcel of the supreme Brahm; both body and soul. Little beyond this fact is to be found concerning him in the Upanishads; content with advancing, and to their satisfaction proving, this great speculation, they left no room for developing his duties to God or to his fellows; or for advocating the principles and grounds on which those duties should be carried out.

It only remains to enquire whether the great Rishis have treated all men alike, or whether they set up differences among them. In reply we find, that though on their theory all have a similar origin, the Upanishads advocate the distinctions of CASTE. They do not however speak of it with all the fulness with which the *Mánava Shástra* does. In their day its details were comparatively few and simple. Still there exists in the Upanishads the *basis* of the system which has been carried forward until it has reached the point which we view with our own eyes. In a hymn of the *Yajur Veda* descriptive of the creation, occurs the following passage: "Into how many portions did they divide this being, whom they immolated? What did his mouth become? What are his arms, his thighs and his feet now called? His mouth became a priest: his arm was made a soldier: his thigh was transformed into a husbandman: from his feet sprang the servile man" (As. Res. vii. 252.) This seems an unmistakeable description of the origin of the different classes of Hindus. But if the Upanishads be consistent, the process of creation must have been somewhat slow, and accomplished only by degrees. "The Bráhmans alone existed in the beginning." (*Brihad Aran.* iv. 11.) He was not satisfied with producing them; the desire to multiply himself not being sufficiently gratified. "All being one, he did not enjoy it: He therefore largely created the Khetriyas of excellent nature." Next he created the Vaisyas: but as there was still a want of slaves, he "therefore made the order of Sudras." The respective ranks which these classes

of beings were to occupy, are not merely pointed out figuratively by the limb of Prajapati from which they sprang ; but plain statements are made that there may be no room for doubt. The first three of the races are widely separated from the fourth : their condition is referred to as one alike honorable and happy : "Those who do well in this world attain to excellent races hereafter, agreeably to their works, whether it be the race of Bráhmans, or Khetriyas, or Vaisyas." (*Chhánd.* v. 6.) The rank of these three is also indicated. Honorable and powerful as was the station of the Khetriyas, they had to confess : "The Bráhmans are our superiors." (*Taitt.* xi. 3.) Again it is said : "Do not respect those who hate the Bráhmans." "Kill those who hate the Bráhmans." (*Sám Veda.*) Though the same divisions therefore existed among the Hindus before the days of Ninus, which exist at this day, yet the mixed castes, which gradually sprang from inter-marriages and improper connections between the different races, and which seem to constitute almost all modern native society apart from the Bráhmans, find scarcely a place in the Upanishads. Only two are mentioned, the *Chandála* and *Paulkasa*, the former of which is one of the lowest castes even in the present age. From these few extracts, we see that even in the Upanishads, a four-fold division of castes is declared to be a divine institution, and to owe its origin to the circumstances of the creation itself!

SECTION 5.—*The state of man, and how he may be freed from it.*

1. However intimate may be the connection between man and the supreme, it is acknowledged by the Upanishads, that man is really *ignorant* of it. He is unacquainted with his nature, his character, his destinies. He revels in the present, in the seeming enjoyments around him, and especially in the gratifications of sense : and the more he does so, the greater is the pleasure he feels in the indulgence. No wonder therefore that in his ignorance, he should be led to

all kinds of frail and fleeting delights : or give himself up as a slave to headstrong passions. But this is the case, however to be lamented, with the large majority of men ; they are blinded by their ignorance and led astray to evil courses, ending in wretchedness and suffering. This condition of man is strongly implied by all the exhortations to an opposite course which the Upanishads address to ' the wise : ' such as to the study of the Vedas and to meditation, which will lead to a better and nobler end. But a few passages speak it plainly. "The dependent soul is bound by worldly enjoyments." (*Swet.* i. 8.) "Living in the midst of ignorance and believing themselves to be wise and knowing, fools frequently are led astray through crooked paths, like a blind man led by a blind man." (*Katha*, ii. 5.) The human soul is a part of the divine essence ; but it knows it not. Hence it thinks itself independent. "Two birds, associates and friends, rest on the same tree : one of them eats the fruit of it ; the other without eating looks on. The human soul, dwelling in the same tree [with the divine], immersed in trouble groans with dejected mind." (*Mund.* iii. 1. 1, 2.) This passage is also in the *Katha* and *Swet.* Upanishads. For this ignorance the soul itself is not altogether responsible. "Knowledge and ignorance are both hidden in him who is the imperishable Brahma, the being without end.... He who governs both knowledge and ignorance is God." (*Swet.* v. 1.) "For he makes him to do good deeds, whom he wishes to bring out of this world : and him he makes to do evil deeds, whom he wishes to bring again into the world." (*Kaushit.*) "Whom he chooses, by him can he be obtained : to him does the spirit manifest himself." (*Mund.* iii. 2. 3 ; also in *Katha*, ii. 2, 3.) With him therefore rest the consequences also. "He is the cause both of our bondage in this world and of our liberation from it." (vi. 17.) Those consequences are serious : "The worlds of ignorance, wrapped up in impervious gloom, do they enter after death, who are destroyers of their own souls." (*Bâj.* 3.)

The most important consequence of this state is, that until the soul gets free from it, it is compelled to undergo a series of *transmigrations*: ever reaping the rewards of its acts, either in punishment or happiness, and then returning to another body to undergo the same round. In time all its pollutions may be purified and it will be re-united with its original essence. This doctrine of transmigration constantly recurs in the Upanishads. It is held up to men as the one great evil they have to avoid: and from which the KNOWLEDGE taught in those books will effectually deliver them. The following are illustrations. "Man is like a blade of corn; he rots away; but like the corn, sprouts forth again." (*Katha*, i. 6.) Yama, the lord of death, says; "He who thinks that this world only is and no other, comes repeatedly under my control." (ii. 6.) "He who is without knowledge, who is of fickle mind, and ever impure, obtains not the supreme glory, but goes again into the world." (iii. 7.) "O Goutam, I will now discourse about the hidden and eternal Brahma and on what the soul becomes after death. According to their works and attainments in knowledge some enter the womb again to obtain a body; others are united to fixed forms." (v. 7.) "If, in this world, before the death of the body, the soul obtains the knowledge of Brahma, it is freed from worldly bonds; but if not, it assumes a body again in these created worlds." (vi. 4.) Other passages will be quoted subsequently from other Upanishads: the above are the professed teaching of Yama himself; with whom transmigration is especially connected.

2. Left to itself the soul will only increase its ignorance and add to its misery: it will receive the reward of its follies and irreligion, by being born in a body corresponding to its deserts: the same round of evil and of sorrow will go on in a lower grade: the reward of the same will be experienced; and thus in process of time, age after age, it will sink to lower and lower degrees of wretchedness till the kalpa in which it exists comes to an end. *To obviate this misfortune*

the Vedas propose to direct the erring mind to religious truth, enlarge its conceptions of the supreme and stimulate it to aim at the highest end of all men, a re-union with Him. In doing so however, it reckons upon *two classes* of followers, those of a higher and lower grade : those who are able to do more for securing the desired object and those who will do less. Its *rules* for each and the fruits of their studies we shall now describe. They constitute the Vedic theory of 'deliverance.'

When Sounaka asked from Angiras a knowledge of the supreme Brahm, the sage replied : "There are two sciences to be acquired, as they who know Brahma declare ; the supreme science and another. This *other* is the *Rig Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sám Veda*, the *Atharva Veda* ;* the rules of accentuation, the rites of religion, Grammar, the Glossary and explanation of obscure terms, Prosody and Astronomy : also the *Itihás and Purána* ; and Logic, with the rules of interpretation and the system of moral duties. But the *supreme science* is that by which the imperishable is apprehended." (*Mund.* i. 1. 4, 5.) "In other passages both these modes of attaining to Brahma are severally dwelt on : in this passage the employment of both is directly sanctioned and taught. Thus in the *Katha*, Yama first teaches Nachiketá the nature of that primordial fire, by the right employment of which, a worshipper may enter Swarga. "Listen attentively, for I am going to reveal the nature of that sacred fire, which is the means of gaining Swarga... He then explained to Nachiketá the nature of the fire ; and the kind and number of bricks requisite for performing the ceremony of that fire and the mode in which it must be celebrated." He also honoured his pupil, by affixing his name to it and calling it the 'Nachiketic fire.' "He who thrice performs the ceremony of this Nachiketic fire, after knowing the kind and number of bricks requisite for it, and the manner of its per-

* Note by Mr. Colebrooke : 'Meaning the prayers contained in the four Vedas, disjoined from Theology.'

formance, and after subduing the influence of the passions, being extricated from sorrow, gains fruition in Swarga." (*Katha*, i.) After this Yama teaches the higher science referred to above. In the *Mundaka* also ritual ceremonies and sacrifices are praised, as one means of elevating the soul and preparing it for enjoyment in the next world. The mode of performing them is also spoken of: and it is declared that the 'sacrifices and ritual observances' of the Vedas are of *divine origin*. (ii. 1. 6.) "By ritual observances is gained one kind of fruit and by the worship of the deities another. So have we heard from the wise who told it to us." (*Bâj.* 10.) Various kinds of worship, and among them (as we have seen) the worship of different gods, are not only recognised but described in the Vedas, even in the Upanishads. Thus the *Aswamedha* is described in the *Brihad Aranyaka*, and so on. These constitute the lower mode of reaching happiness.

The higher method, the supreme science, is that which conveys a KNOWLEDGE OF BRAHMA himself, of his nature, attributes and acts. While approving the former mode, the Upanishads look on this as the method most desirable, and make it their business to teach it. *Meditation* on the character of the supreme as described by them is the higher science. "MEDITATION [*tapa*] is the root of the knowledge of THE SPIRIT: that Brahma is the theme of the Upanishads." (*Swet.* i. 16.) "The wise apply their mind and understanding to that great all-pervading and intelligent one, who has ordained all our actions and who knows all our thoughts. This is the noblest worship of the divine creator." (*Swet.* ii. 4.) "When the senses with the mind rest in him, and when the understanding is not engaged, this is the best mode of obtaining him. This concentration of senses and powers is called *yog* or 'meditation.'" (*Katha*, vi. 10, 11.) "He who knows him as the knower of every thought of every individual mind, obtains immortality. By self-effort is gained energy; by knowledge is gained immortality. Contemplating him through object after object, the wise, on

departing from this world, become immortal." (*Tal.* 12, 13.) "This spirit is to be gained by truth and devotion, by complete wisdom, and by constant bodily mortifications." (*Mund.* iii. 1. 5.) "They who know the Vedánt and observe its meaning well, who exercise devout meditation, [*sannyásyóg*] and who are pure, at last in Brahma-lok, are altogether delivered [*mukta*] and become immortal." (iii. 26.) The mode in which this meditation is carried on, the external circumstances attending it, the position of the devotee and so on, have already been quoted in our first Section. The following statement of the gradual development of its benefits cannot be omitted: "In the first stages of meditation Brahma is displayed as frost and smoke, as wind and light and fire, as the sun and lightning, as crystal and as the moon." (*Swet.* ii. 11.) In other passages, the use of the sacred syllable is declared to be a part of this meditation, and the mode of employing it is illustrated by striking similes. "After sharpening thy arrow by devotion, fix it to that great weapon, the bow found in the Upanishad, and after drawing it and carefully aiming at thy mark, pierce him (O beloved) who is the imperishable. It is said that OM is the bow, the soul is the arrow, and Brahma the mark. He must be pierced by attention: and as an arrow penetrates its mark, so do thou penetrate him." (*Mund.* ii. 2. 3, 4.) "As fire within two slips of sacred wood.. does not display itself till they are rubbed together, so is it with OM and the mind. Having made his mind one slip and OM the other, let a man rub them together by meditation [*dhyán*] that he may behold the supreme." (*Swet.* i. 13, 14.) The following passage immediately succeeds the one now quoted. "As oil in sesamum, as butter in curdled-milk, as water beneath dry channels, as fire in slips of wood, so is the spirit obtained by those who worship him with intelligence and meditation. The all-pervading spirit is like butter contained in milk." (i. 15, 16.)

3. We pass on to consider the *benefits* resulting from the two modes of serving the supreme which the Upanishads

describe. Benefits are derived even from the *lower* kind of worship paid to him. The mind of the worshipper is elevated and purified in this world : he obtains some reward in the next : and enters into a more honourable body and position, on his return to this world, than he enjoyed before. Thus will he rise till he finally reaches the highest bliss, absorption into Brahma. The Upanishads teach that the rewards of sacrifice and of the worship of the deities, are *real* ; and therefore encourage men to seek them : but they also clearly describe them as *perishable* and *short-lived*. "The ritual observances in the Vedas, which poets saw, are various and bear genuine fruits. Practise them frequently, O you who are desirous of future fruition : for this is your path to the worlds of reward.... Him, who pours offerings on the luminous points of the sacrificial fire, the sun-beams carry to the mansions of the king of the gods." (*Mund.* i. 2. 1, 5.) "He who thrice performs the ceremony of the Nachiketic fire, according to the instructions of the three [his father, mother and guru], and who performs the three works [study of the Vedas, sacrifice and gifts] is delivered from birth and death. Having become properly acquainted with that fire which is sprung from Brahma, the knower of ritual observances endued with splendour and worthy of praise, obtains exceeding peace." (*Katha*, i. 17.) "It is said that by ceremonies is obtained one kind [of reward] and by the worship of the gods, another. So have we heard from the wise who told it to us.... O Agni, thou witness of our religious acts, purge us from our malign sins, and guide us through the right path to the dwelling of joy." (*Báj.* 10, 18.) "Frail and perishable are such worthless observances, for the celebration of each of which are required eighteen performers. Those fools, who rejoice in them as the cause of bliss eternal, return again to disease and death." (*Mund.* i. 2. 7.) "I know that the fruition attendant on ritual ceremonies is transitory, because the imperishable cannot be gained by means of the perishable. Knowing this, however, I performed [says Yama]

the ceremony of the Nachiketic fire and have gained, by perishable objects, this eternal authority." (*Katha*, ii. 10.) "At this Agni, Váyu, and Indra became superior to the rest of the gods as they approached and touched Brahma, and knew him first as such, and to them all Indra became superior as he approached and touched Brahma, and was the first to know him as such." These last two passages shew us the influence of this service even upon gods themselves!

The fruits of the *higher* doctrine are naturally higher, and though greatest in the next world, begin even in the present one. *a.* The following passages describe the state, *during life*, of the man who has obtained the knowledge of Brahma. "When one bird [the human soul] sees the other [the supreme], it becomes freed from sorrow." (*Mund.* iii. 1. 2.) "Whatever worlds he desires in mind, and whatever enjoyments he wishes for, with a pure heart, those worlds and those enjoyments, he who knows Brahma obtains. . . . Whatever he desires he obtains, all the desires of the satisfied devotee vanish away even in this life." (*Mund.* iii. 1. 10. iii. 2. 2.) "He even here enjoys God." (*Katha*, vi. 14.) "Among those who know the supreme, he is pre-eminent whose amusement is God, whose enjoyment is God, and who practises active virtue." (*Mund.* iii. 1. 4.) *b.* He holds a peculiar relation to *good* and *evil*. "The knot of the heart is divided; all doubts are dissolved, and his works [both good and evil] vanish, when that supreme one is seen." (*Mund.* ii. 2. 8.) "He can do neither good nor evil." (iii. 1. 3.) "He does not become greater by good deeds, nor less by evil ones." (*Kaushit.*) "He comes forth from all sins who knows this." (*Chh.* i. 6.) "As water wets not the leaves of the water-lily, so sin touches not him who knows this: as the combings of a comb when cast into the fire are consumed, so are sins consumed." (iv. 14.) "He who steals gold, who drinks spirits, who ascends his guru's bed, and who slays a bráhmaṇ, these four fall [into hell]; and the fifth is he who has communion with those: but *he who knows*

this doctrine, though he have communion with them, is not contaminated by sin, is holy, is pure and is fit for the pure worlds." (v. 10)!

c. After death he is *united with Brahma and is absorbed* into him. "He who completely understands this [part of the] Veda, after being free from sin goes to Swarga and abides there for ever: abides there for ever." (*Tal.* 34.) "Those who are well acquainted with the meanings of the Vedánt, who have given themselves to devout meditation and who are of pure mind, in the end, in Brahma-lok, are altogether free and immortal. The fifteen members of their body are resolved into their primary elements, the senses are not controlled by their operant causes; their acts and the mind all become one when the latter dwells in the supreme." (*Mund.* iii. 2. 6, 7.) There will be *no more transmigration* to such: henceforth they will be completely free from that dreaded evil. "The man, who becomes wise, thoughtful and ever pure, reaches the divine glory and descends no more from it into the world." (*Katha*, iii. 8.) "The man who knows him obtains freedom and dies no more." "They who know him become immortal." (vi. 8, 9.) "Nachiketá, having gained from the mouth of Yama a knowledge [of the supreme] and all the rules of meditation, was freed from all earthly sorrows and obtained Brahma. They who obtain the same knowledge in the same way obtain Brahma also." (vi. 18.) "They who know him as present in all things, and are acquainted with the science of Brahma, are *ABSORBED* [*lina*] into Brahma, and are freed from transmigration." (*Svet.* i. 7.) "He, who knows the supreme is free from all bonds, from all miseries, and is freed from birth and death. Through meditation upon him, by the dissolution of the body, he gains the third state, and has the universe for his wealth." (i. 11.) "Those gods and Rishis who in former days knew him became immortal." (v. 6.) "The wise, who worship the perfect one, avoid another birth." (*Mund.* iii. 2. 1.) This absorption is *complete* and *final*: nothing remains of the individual, who

has obtained the benefit. "That soul rising from the body, having arrived at the supreme light, POSSESSES HIS FORM." (*Chhând.* viii. 12.) "As rivers flowing go into the sea and lose their name and form: so the wise FREED FROM NAME AND FORM, GAIN HIM who is supreme, perfect and splendid. He who knows that supreme Brahma, BECOMES BRAHMA.* No one, in his race, becomes ignorant of Brahma. He escapes from sorrow, he escapes from sin, and freed from the knots of the heart dies no more." (*Mund.* iii. 2. 8, 9.) "Recognising heaven, earth and sky to be HIM; knowing the worlds, discovering space and the solar orb to be the same; he views that being: he BECOMES THAT BEING: and is IDENTIFIED WITH HIM, on completing the broad web of the solemn sacrifice." [*Yajur: Sarvameda: As. Res.* viii. 433.] We would add here, though not strictly belonging to this branch of the subject, that *absorption* into the supreme will eventually happen to the whole universe at the expiration of the *Kalpa*: and that '*absorption*' is referred to, when we read of the creation *returning* to the Being from whom it sprang. Thus: "In HIM this world is ABSORBED; FROM HIM IT ISSUES; in creatures he is twined and woven, with various forms of existence". (p. 432.)

A *second* and lower degree of happiness is obtained by those who have by meditation, sacrifice, and ritual ceremonies served Brahma much, but not so as to obtain the highest reward. "They who are devoted to both the performance of ritual ceremonies and the worship of the deities, being extricated from death by the former, enjoy through the latter a

* In the translation of this passage in the *Tattwabodhini Patrikā* and in the Pamphlet of '*A Hindu*,' great liberty has been taken: both omissions and insertions having been made at pleasure. Thus: "He who knows God, becomes [like] god, [in knowledge and happiness.]" The Sanskrit is as follows:

সম্যোহ বৈ তং পরমং ব্রহ্ম বেদ ব্রহ্মৈব ভবতি।

In the *Vedānta Sār*, this passage is quoted as a *Śrūti*: and the Bengali translation of the *Tattwabodhini* edition has most correctly and idiomatically rendered it thus:

যিনি ব্রহ্মকে জানেন, তিনি ব্রহ্মই হন।

urable divinity." (*Báj.* 11.) "If he desires the worlds of the *pitris*, from his own wish the *pitris* rise; having gained that world of the *pitris* he is exalted." "Whatever end he wishes for; whatever desire he experiences, from his mere wish that rises; having gained it he is exalted." (*Chhând.* viii. 2.)

The course which these have to follow, and that which is taken by others of still lower rank in merit, is well described in that section of the *Chhândagya* Upanishad, v. which is called *Panchágnibidyá*. The passage is as follows: "They who know this, and who in the woods exercise faith and practise bodily mortification, obtain fire: from fire they get light; from light, the crescent half of the bright moon; from that the six months in which the sun goes toward the north; from those months the year; from the year the sun: from the sun the moon; from the moon lightning; the regent of lightning conducts them to Brahma: this is the way of the Gods. They, who in villages perform works of merit and of benevolence, go to smoke; from smoke, to night; from night, to the time of the moon's waning; from that, to the six months in which the sun is going southward; they reach the year; from the months they obtain the world of the *pitris*; from the world of the *pitris*, the ether; from the ether the moon. He is king Soma; that is the food of the gods and they feed on it. After they have lived there a suitable time, they return by the same road as that they came by; they go to the ether; from ether to the wind; the wind becomes smoke; the smoke, cloud; the cloud pours down rain; hence they become a grain of rice or barley, or plants or trees; hence their progress is more difficult; whoever eats that nourishment and marries secures this. They who here do works of merit, obtain a womb in high rank, as that of a Bráhmaṇ, Khetriya or Vaisya mother. They who do evil deeds obtain a vile womb, as of a dog, a boar or a chandál." Such is the Vedic theory of rewards and punishments.

CHAPTER III.

MODERN BRAHMISM.

IT now remains to examine the peculiar opinions of the modern worshippers of Brahma. This school of religionists was founded, as we have already described, by the late RÁJÁ RÁMMOHAN ROY. For a long period, the doctrines they professed to believe; the agreements they acknowledged with the old school of Vedántists; and the points of difference in which they departed from them, were matters of considerable doubt. Both friends and opponents, on enquiring into their opinions, were met with uncertain and unsatisfactory replies. This difficulty has however lately been entirely removed, as the following facts will show.

More than a year ago, the author of these pages addressed a note to the Secretary of the Tattwabodhini Sabhá, requesting that he might kindly be furnished with information on the following vital points, as he was anxious to gain a clear and correct knowledge of their system: (1) "What are considered, by the modern school of Vedántists in Calcutta, the standards of authority in religion, from whence their faith is derived and by which it is expressed and defined? (2) On what points, whether of more or less importance, does the modern school differ from the ancient one? (3) In what modern works do the present Vedántists consider, that their peculiar opinions are in general correctly expressed?" The note was laid before the *Bráhma Samáj* at one of their Wednesday meetings, and by their directions a most courteous reply was despatched to the author, containing among other things the following passage. "The doctrines of the Bráhmas or spiritual worshippers of God, whom I presume you mean by 'modern Vedántists,' are founded upon a broader and more unexceptionable basis, than the Scriptures of a single religious denomination in the earth. The volume of nature is open to all, and that volume contains a Revelation, clearly teaching, in strong and legible characters, the great

truths of religion and morality ; and giving us as much knowledge of our state after death, as is necessary for the attainment of future blessedness ; yet adapted to the present state of our mental faculties. Now as the Hindu religion contains notions of God and of human duty, which coincide with that Revelation, we have availed ourselves of extracts from works which are the great depositories of the national faith, and which have the advantage of national associations on their side, for disseminating the principles of pure religion among our countrymen. You will not find fully the information you are desirous to obtain about our doctrines in the *Tattwabodhini Patriká*, or in the reports of the *Tattwabodhini Sabhá* ; the *Bráhma Samáj* having no reports, as it is simply a meeting for the purposes of worship. The information you want *can be obtained from a work, which will soon issue from the press. This work contains a complete exposition of the principles by which we are guided in our religious belief."*

The work thus referred to, as containing an authorized exposition of their opinions, was published by the *Tattwabodhini Sabhá*, about the first of October 1850 : its title is, **BRÁHMA DHARMA**. It is a small and neat book, written in Sanskrit and Bengali, the counterparts of one another. The Sanskrit precedes, occupying 123 pages, and is accompanied by a Commentary, printed under the text. The Bengali follows, occupying 94 pages : it is an exact translation of the Sanskrit text. The matter of the work is divided into two 'Parts' (*Khanda*;) the first of which contains sixteen chapters (*adhyáy*), and the second, seventeen. Three or four appendices, containing 'Statements of principles' and 'Prayers' conclude the work. Its price is one rupee. The *First Part* relates chiefly to the attributes of the supreme, and consists almost entirely of passages taken from different Upanishads, many of which were quoted in our last chapter. The *Second Part* consists of moral precepts and reads very like a book of proverbs. Portions of it seem to be taken from the Institutes of Manu.

From this little book, then, we shall endeavour to develop the *creed* of the society founded by Rámmohan Roy, referring occasionally to other publications, written by members of the society, with a view to gain light on certain points which otherwise have been left a little obscure. There is always an advantage in a society like this possessing a *distinctive name*. From want of it in the present case, numerous errors have arisen and will arise until the defect is remedied. Sometimes the members have been called *Vedántists*; at other times, *Deists*. Yet, as we shall immediately see, they are not followers of the school of Vyás; they repudiate some of the doctrines taught by the Vedas; and have certain points, both of belief and practice, which decidedly distinguish them from the European Deists. They call themselves BRÁHMAS (ब्रह्म), that is "worshippers of Brahma," the one supreme God of the Hindus: and their religion, *Bráhma Dharma*: i. e., 'the religion of the worshippers of Brahma.' I would suggest, therefore, that in our English idiom their system should be called BRÁHMISM: and themselves BRÁHMISTS or BRÁHMAS.*

The first appendix to the BRÁHMA DHARMA gives a brief outline of the Bráhma system, and we therefore quote it first. It is as follows: (p. 87.)

"PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION.

1. 'Before the production of this world, there existed only the one supreme Brahma; nothing else existed whatsoever. He created all this.

* In the course of this work the words *Brahma*, *Brahmá* and *Bráhma* have frequently occurred and will occur again. As the three names denote different persons and have each a different pronounciation, it may be well to say a few words in explanation for the benefit of our native readers. A little attention to the matter will obviate all confusion.

Brahma, denotes the One Supreme Deity, and is pronounced *Brum-ho* or *Brum*.

Brahmá, denotes the chief God of the Hindu Triad and is pronounced *Brum-há*.

Bráhma, denotes a worshipper of the Supreme and is pronounced *Brám-ho*.

2. 'He is wisdom, eternity, joy and goodness personified : the everlasting, ruler of all, all-wise, without form, one only without a second : most wonderful in power.

3. 'From his worship alone is happiness produced both here and hereafter.

4. 'That worship consists in loving him and performing actions which give him pleasure.'

The next appendix is on the same subject and is entitled

THE BRÁHMIST'S COVENANT.

"OM. This day, the — day of the month of —, in the year —, I adopt the religion of the worshippers of Brahma.

1. 'I will live devoted to the worship of that one supreme Brahma, who is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer [of the universe ;] the cause of 'deliverance;' all-wise ; all-pervading ; full of joy ; the good ; and without form. I will worship him with love and by doing things that will give him pleasure.

2. 'I will worship no created thing, as the supreme Brahma, the creator of all.

3. 'Except on days of sickness or calamity, I will every day, when my mind shall be at rest, in faith and love, fix my thoughts in contemplation on the supreme.

4. 'I will live earnest in the practice of good deeds.

5. 'I will endeavour to live free from evil deeds.

6. 'If, overcome by temptation, I perchance do any thing evil, I will surely desire to be freed from it and be careful [for the future].

7. 'Every year, and in all my worldly prosperity, I will offer gifts to the Bráhma Samáj.

'O! God! grant unto me strength that I may entirely observe this excellent religion.'

SECTION 1.—*The sources of divine knowledge.*

Though the *Bráhma Dharma* is the exposition of the Bráhmist Creed, it points out THE SOURCES OF DIVINE KNOW-

LEDGE as follows: "In order to obtain a special knowledge of the Supreme Brahma, the disciple must go to a teacher. The wise teacher, if he perceive the pupil before him to be of a thoroughly peaceful and tranquil mind, will instruct him in that science by which the imperishable and self-existing Perfect One may be known. The Rig Veda, the Yajur, the Sám, the Atharva Vedas, the rules of accentuation, the rites of religion, grammar, the glossary, prosody and astronomy; these constitute the inferior science. That is the most excellent science by which a knowledge of the Imperishable Supreme Brahma is obtained." (iii. 1, 2).^{*} In accordance with this statement we find the following passage in one of the most widely circulated pamphlets of the Tattwabodhini Sabhá, called *Vedántic doctrines vindicated*. "We will not deny that the Reviewer is correct in remarking, that we consider the Vedas and Vedas alone as the authorised rule of Hindu theology. They are the sole foundation of all our belief. . . . What we consider as revelation is contained in the Vedas alone; and the last parts (the Upanishads) of our holy Scripture, treating of the final dispensation of Hinduism, form what is called (by us) the Vedánt." (p. 28.) "Our humble object is merely to revive and propagate an existing system of truths. . . . The Vedas are now what they were centuries ago. They declare that the sole regulator of the universe is but One, Omnipresent, Omniscient, far surpassing our powers of comprehension, beyond external sense, and whose spiritual worship is the chief duty of mankind and the sole cause of eternal beatitude. In this brief sentence is contained the essence of our belief." (p. 15.) "*Vedantism* is our creed and the *Upanishads* are our book of religion." (Patriká No. 32: p. 276.)

^{*} This reference denotes the *third* chapter and *first* paragraph of Part I. When Part II. is quoted, it will be distinguished from the former by the letter B.

SECTION 2.—*The Supreme God.*

It is often declared that the SUPREME GOD is ONE, eternal, uncreated, pure intelligence. *Ekamebádwtiyam*, 'He is one and without a second,' is the motto of Bráhmism. "He is without birth, the great Spirit," (ii. 1). "He has no producer, no master." (vii. 3). "He is the only eternal one." (viii. 8.) "The name of Brahma is the ether." (xiv. 11.)

SECTION 3.—*His attributes.*

VARIOUS ATTRIBUTES are frequently ascribed to him. In the following places several are enumerated at once. "He is without organs of perception, without organs of action, unborn, without form, without eyes or ears; without hands or feet; excepted from birth and death; all pervading; moving everywhere; too small for sense to see; without diminution; the cause of all things. He is neither thick nor thin; neither short nor long: he is without blood; without love; without shadow; without breath, &c." (iii. 3, 4.) He is *Omnipresent*. "His eye is present every where: his face every where; his arm every where; his feet every where; he joins the arm of man to his body; he joins the bird's wing to its body: the one god created heaven and earth." (viii. 1.) "He is below, he is above; he is behind, he is before: he is on the south side, he is on the north. He is the Lord of the past and the future: he is to-day and will be to-morrow." (xiv. 3.)

He is also said to *abide* in all things and to *pervade* them. "Whatever things are included in this egg of Brahma, are all pervaded by God." (v. 1, 3; vi. 7.) The *Bráhma Dharma* teaches of his *power*. "His wonderful and sublime power is everywhere heard: and works of wisdom and works of might are natural to him." (vii. 2.) Also of his *wisdom*. "He knows all things which can be known." (viii. 4.) All things are under his mighty sway: he presides over all as their *king*. "That supreme, illustrious and blessed Lord of the world we know, who is the great God of gods, the great

debta of debtas and the Lord of lords." (vii. 1.) "This supreme Spirit is the Lord of all things, the King of all things." (ix. 10.) He is the *fountain of joy*. "That supreme Spirit is happiness itself and the cause of delight." (i. 4.)

A few passages refer to MORAL ATTRIBUTES, though such attributes are not numerous. Thus *purity* is ascribed to him. "That supreme Spirit is. . . spotless. . . without sin. . . and pure in nature." (v. 5.) He is *good*, and is called *mangal swarup*. (ix. 5 :) but again he is said to be "*without love*," (*Asneha*) (vi. 4.) *Holy conduct* is the fruit of his suggestions and influence. "That pure, wise and imperishable God, with a view to produce pure peace, incites men to holy deeds." (ix. 17.) "He is the fountain of holiness, the punisher of sin, the Lord of wealth." (xiv. 5.) "At all times he decrees to all his subjects the rewards and punishments which they deserve." (v. 5.) "He is the refuge of all and the friend of all." (ix. 16.)

SECTION 4.—*His relation to the Universe.*

In relation to the universe, Brahma is declared to be both CREATOR and PRESERVER. The universe that he made, he governs by his Providence. Many passages speak of this. "From the joyous supreme, all these living things sprang and by him they remain alive." "He is the prime mover of the animate creation. . . all other living things enjoy but a portion of his joy." (i. 2, 8.) "He alone appoints to all things their peculiar natures." (xii. 4.) "He reflected about the creation of the universe. . . From this supreme sprang breath, reason and all the senses ; also ether, air, light, water, and this earth which supports all things in the world." (ii. 2, 3.) The following passages speak of his sustaining power very fully. "By the control of this imperishable God, O Gárgi, the sun and moon are firmly upheld. By his control, the sky and the earth ; minutes, hours, day and night ; the phases of the moon, the months, seasons, years, are all firmly established. By his controul, many streams flowing east

and west, burst forth from the white mountains." "Through fear of him the wind goes forward ; the sun rises ; fire flames ; the clouds pour forth water ; and death moves on. From its being the habitation of the living supreme, all this egg of Brahma, which sprang from him, is sustained by well appointed laws." (iii. 5-8, 12, 13.) "He is the bridge on which all worlds rest and by which their dissolution is prevented." (vii. 10.) A curious simile taken from the Upanishads, exhibits the same truth. "As all the spokes of a chariot wheel are fixed into the nave and circumference, so are all things, all debtas, all worlds, all lives, every living thing fixed in the supreme. (ix. 11.)

Several pantheistic passages occur in the *Bráhma Dharma*, quoted from the Upanishads, as the reader will at once see. "He is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech, the breath of breath, the eye of the eye." (iv. 1.) "He who sees that all things abide in the supreme Spirit and perceives the existence of the supreme Spirit in all things, feels not dislike towards any." (v. 4.) "I offer a thousand salutations to that illustrious God, who has entered into fire, water and the universe ; and who abides in plants and trees." (x. 7.) "The knower of Brahma perceives that light of light, the brilliant supreme, in the glittering sheath of human reason." (vi. 4.) "He abides thoroughly and always in the (physical) hearts of all." (vii. 4 ; viii. 6, 7.) It is evident however that the Brahmists are not pantheists : they have most fully repudiated the notion in their writings and have endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to shew that the doctrine is *not* taught in the Upanishads. Besides, several passages occur in the *Bráhma Dharma*, which declare a *distinction* between the Creator and his works, and we must suppose therefore that the extracts just quoted are taken in an accommodated sense. "He is different from all things known or unknown." "Whatever men worship that can be measured, that is not Brahma." (iv. 2, 3.) "He has sprung from no cause ; *neither has he become any thing else.*" (vii. 12.)

“He is the witness of all, and possesses none of the qualities of created things.” (xii. 3.)

SECTION 5.—*Gods and debtas.*

Among the works of creation, GODS and DEBTAS are specially recognised. “He is the supreme debta of all the debtas.” [His office and character are here shewn to be like theirs, and theirs like his.] “The gods incessantly worship the supreme Brahma.” (vii. 1, 8.) In the simile of the chariot wheel, above quoted, the debtas are acknowledged to be a part of the creation. “He is the Lord of the debtas.” (xiii. 3.) “All the gods offer him worship.” (x. 1.) Of the defence of *idol worship* contained in some part of the writings of the Brahmas; and of the benefits alleged to be derived from it by the illiterate, we shall speak more fully hereafter.

SECTION 6.—*Of man.*

Little is said concerning the *structure* of MAN or those features of his constitution which distinguish him from other parts of the creation. But in several passages it is declared that the supreme dwells in the heart (literally); and that sloka is quoted from the *Mundaka Upanishad* in which the divine and human souls in the heart of man are compared to two birds, sitting on the same tree: they are ‘mutual friends,’ but one is independent, the other is not. (ix. 1, 2.) A similar passage from another Upanishad is quoted in xiii. 7. A favourite description of man in the *Tattwabodhini* pamphlets, is that of one of the Vedic sloks, “the son of the Immortal.” The *duties* of man to God are but slightly touched on: the duty of worship is spoken of most frequently: but we shall reserve the statements concerning it to another paragraph. At present we merely quote the following. “Our first duty .. is constantly to think of God, to remember him in all our ways, to fix our thoughts on him, whenever we are free from the anxieties arising out of our worldly concerns, and to make

him the starting post and goal of all our reasonings and actions, This is the only adoration that can be acceptable to him, as such devotions alone can make us really happy. Expressions of gratitude will naturally arise, when we think of the multifarious benefits we have derived from him. But adorations are the offspring of the mind, and must therefore proceed sincerely and reverentially from the heart. The mind of the worshipper of the true divinity must be led, by enquiries into the phenomena of nature, to the perception of the beauty and grandeur of the world, and from this perception to those happy feelings of gratitude for the Creator and regulator of the universe, and resignation to his will in which consist true reverence and devotion to Him, and upon which depends the true beatitude that we all seek for." (*Vedāntic doctrines*, p. 40.)

SECTION 7.—*Of morality.*

MORALITY, or the duties of man to man, occupies a much larger space in the work than the higher duties of religion; but in drawing out its precepts no great originality has been displayed. The following passages point out these duties *in general*: we shall presently exhibit some precepts concerning their particular branches.

"Patience, forgiveness, subjugation of mind, honesty, purity of mind and body, control over the passions, knowledge of the shāstras, knowledge of Brahma, speaking the truth and freedom from anger; these are the ten signs of virtue." (B. xii. 1.) "By *forgiveness* people are subdued; forgiveness is the highest wealth; forgiveness is the excellence of the weak, the ornament of the strong. (B. xii. 6.) *Charity* is largely dwelt on in the tenth chapter of Part II. "Give beds to the sick: seats to the weary: drinks to the thirsty: food to the hungry.. No other gift is superior to the gift of land: the gift of knowledge is more excellent than that. To the poor, the blind and other pitiable objects, give medicines, food, unguents and other such things. The gifts of the

charitable man who disregards his own wretched family and gives to others, are only apparently virtuous acts, in reality they are not : at present they may be as sweet as honey, but in time their taste will be like poison." (p. 70.) *Truth* is frequently recommended. "Speak the truth : the man who tells lies dries up root and all." (xvi. 5.) "The witness, who speaks the truth, does not depart from the object of virtue. He shall truly tell all that he has seen and heard. The gods esteem above all men the witness who doubts not that he has spoken the truth." (B. viii. 1-3.) "The virtuous man proclaims not his own fame and excellence : nor the secret which has been entrusted to him : nor his acts of kindness towards others." (B. vii. 1.) He is instructed to *avoid bad company*. "By living with fools temptations arise : but from daily intercourse with the good springs sure virtue." (B. ix. 3.) *Forbearance* is also urged. "Bear all the abuse of others : insult no one : having acquired human birth, you must make no man an enemy." (B. i. 8.) *Covetousness* must be avoided in every way. "He who regards the wives of others as his own mother : another's wealth as clods of earth ; and all living creatures as himself, regards them rightly." (B. xii. 8.) The following sentences describe a *good man*, according to the *Bráhma Dharma*. "He who is intelligent, well-behaved, gentle, kind, and a knower of Brahma, in this world gains respect and in the next world prosperity ; he whose speech and judgment are ever guided by prudence, who practises meditation and charity, and who speaks the truth, obtains the highest rank. He who is not a slave to sense, who takes refuge in virtue and who is diligent in business, seeks not evil and is not inclined towards sin." (B. v. 7-9.) The *grateful* and *sincere* are included in the same rank, and receive the same blessings as these. (B. ix. 6.)

Men are exhorted to heed these things when *young*. "Be virtuous in the days of youth : life is not eternal : who knows who shall die to-day. . . . In early youth do that by which you will enjoy comfort in old age : and through life do that by

which you will enjoy happiness in the next world." (B. v. 6, 13.) Death however must not be too earnestly desired: under all circumstances men must be patient. "Desire not death: neither desire life: wait for the proper time: as a servant waits for pay-day." (14.)

SECTION 8.—*Family duties.*

In a work among Hindus, FAMILY DUTIES will of course assume an important place. We will first consider what the *Bráhma Dharma* teaches about *marriage*. We find in it some ideas new to the Hindus in general. "So long as a man remains without a wife, he is only half a man. The house which has no boys in it is like a burning-place for the dead. For the rearing of children, all wives are worthy of kindness and respect: they enlighten a house.... A man ought to marry a wife, perfect in form and gentle in disposition.... Husbands and wives must never till death commit adultery with any one. This in few words is their chief duty. She is a true wife, who is the life of her husband. She is a real wife, who has children.... Like a shadow she will be dependent upon him and will seek his welfare.. She will be active in household duties.. She will quarrel with no one and will not waste money.. A wife will possess the qualities of the husband whom she marries: as the sweet water of a river, when it mingles with the sea, becomes salt." (B. ii. and iii.) The marriage of *young girls* is not approved. "So long as a girl does not understand the respect due to a husband, or the work required by him: and so long as she remains ignorant of the control of virtue, so long her father ought not to give her in marriage." (B. iii. 4.) Again, the giving of money for a wife is also reprobated. "The wife, who is bought for a price, is not a wife according to law." The father who receives money for such is declared to be a seller of his child.

The duties and relations of the different *members of a household* are in some places touched on. "The householder

should be devoted to Brahma and to a search after truth. Whatever work he engage in, he should commit to the supreme." (B. i. 2.) "A man should esteem his eldest brother as a father: his wife and sons as his own body: his servants as his shadow, and his daughters as objects of kindness." "To a younger brother, an elder brother's wife is like his guru's wife: and to the eldest brother, a younger brother's wife is like a daughter-in-law: So say the munis." (B. ii. 14.) The householder is urged to *educate* his children: and in particular to instruct his daughters well and marry them to educated men. (iii. 1, 2.) "The householder must look on his father and mother as a present deity and serve them with all his might." (i. 3.)

SECTION 9.—*Man's duty to himself.*

Man has also some *duties towards himself*, prompted by self-love. *Self-restraint* is one of these. "In order to preserve his body from decay, a man must subdue his senses and accomplish the ends of life." (B. xiv. 7.) "The man who, every day, eats flesh of living creatures, does nothing wrong: for God created both the eater and his food." (B. iv. 1.*) But he must be careful how this is done. "By eating too much, diseases are produced," and other evils arise. Neither must he sleep too much, nor drink spirits; nor indulge improper desires, all these things must be enjoyed moderately. Again, even the alternations of pleasure and pain must be received with calmness. "Men share pleasure and pain successively: when pleasure is present they may enjoy it: and when pain comes, should bear it. Neither pain nor pleasure lasts for ever. The body is the refuge of both, whichever happens let not the mind give way. When you lose money do not despair and do not give up virtue. By grief beauty goes: strength goes: wisdom goes: and disease arises." (B. vi.)

* The *fourth* chapter of the *second* Part in which this passage occurs, has been withdrawn from the *Bráhma Dharma*, since it was published.

SECTION 10.—*Of motives to Virtue.*

Philosophers have often disputed about the BASIS of VIRTUE and the ground on which it rests. This question is most important in morals, for upon it depends the *power* of those MOTIVES by which men will be influenced to follow and practise that virtue. Let the reader ponder the following few sentences, in which Brahminism instructs us on this head.

"All the actions which are unblamed (by others) you may perform : actions which are blamed you must not perform.

"Whatever virtue we practise, you may do : but do not practise any thing besides." (xvi. 9, 10.)

"Apply yourself to that which you consider to advance your own good." (B. ix. 1.)

"Follow out with the greatest zeal, whatever course will give satisfaction to yourself, and leave every thing opposed to it." (B. xiii. 4.)

Two other *motives* to goodness are presented in the following passages : "The man who performs works of virtue obtains holy praise, and goes to the world of virtue." Such a man "obtains respect in this world and prosperity in the next."

SECTION 11.—*Of Sin.*

We may next enquire, what Bráhmism says of the NATURE of SIN. Several kinds of facts are pointed out as illustrating it. *Ignorance* of the supreme is one species of evil. "Deliver yourselves from the darkness of ignorance. Ye souls ! arise ; wake up from the sleep of ignorance and learn wisdom from a fitting teacher." (x. 3 ; xi. 4.) *Worldliness* is another kind. "Men of small understanding being devoted to external things are enchained by death." (xii. 8.) The *six passions* cause men to stray. "Anger is an enemy hard to overcome ; covetousness is an endless disease." (B. xii. 3.) "Endeavours to get others' wealth : evil thoughts of others : and unbelief in God and a future world, are three sins of the

understanding. Unkind speeches : lies : scandal about others : and improper conversation are four sins of the tongue. Theft, improper envy and whoredom are three sins of the body." (B. xvi. 4-6.) "When the reason follows the passions, a man's mind is destroyed ; just as the wind overwhelms a vessel in the waves." *Ingratitude* is a sin : so also are *injustice*, *envy*, *insincerity* and *hypocrisy*. "The man who is malicious, of evil nature, an atheist, cruel, artful, and a hater of the good, Pundits consider utterly vile." (B. xi. 6.) "The sinner, though forbidden to sin, will sin still." (xv. 8.)

SECTION 12.—*The punishment of Sin.*

These acts of wickedness are not to be committed with impunity. They will be followed by PUNISHMENT. A few passages assert this. "The supreme decrees to all his subjects the rewards and punishments which they deserve." (v. 5.) "According to the works and conduct of a man will be his condition. He who does pure things becomes pure ; and he who commits sins is a sinner." "Foolish men obtain those worlds which are without joy, and are covered with dense darkness." (xv. 3, 9.) "The man who, influenced by vice, thinks sin, speaks sin, and practises sin, loses thereby all his good qualities." "The man who practises sin obtains disgrace and reaps miserable fruits." (B. xv. 3, 13.) These consequences of evil though not very strongly stated, being without authority, are declared to be very useful. "All worlds are ruled by punishment.... By the fear of punishment the whole earth is preserved." (B. xii. 4.)

SECTION 13.—*The Way of Salvation.*

Of the WAY OF DELIVERANCE from these punishments and from the inherent love of sin, Bráhmism speaks much : deliverance being the great object which the system proposes to secure. The most perfect deliverance is *not* to be secured

by *sacrifices* or *ceremonies*. The man who knows not the Imperishable supreme, though he sacrifice in the world for many thousand years, will not obtain lasting benefits." (iii. 9.) It is to be secured by the *knowledge* of *Brahma*. "I have known the great perfect one who is full of light: the worshipper only by knowing him overcomes death: there is no other way of obtaining liberation than this." (xvi. 13.) "By wisdom may the supreme Spirit be obtained." (xiii. 1.) "They who know the supreme *Brahma* become immortal: all others suffer misery." (ix. 13.) What is meant by *knowing Brahma* is not very clearly defined. It may mean knowing his attributes, knowing his actions, or knowing his relation to man. The term seems used in a comprehensive sense. In one passage it seems to mean something like pantheism: or if not meant to extend so far, at least points to the very intimate connection between *Brahma* and the creation. Thus it is said, "They surely know that ancient and most excellent supreme *Brahma*, who recognise him as the breath of the breath, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, and the mind of the mind." (vii. 6.) Mere words will not suffice to understand him: the reason must perceive what he is and does, and the heart must give him *worship*. "Not by many fair words: nor by a good memory: nor by hearing oft, may he be known. The worshipper *who prays to him* obtains him. The supreme Spirit reveals himself to such a worshipper." (xi. 3.) This *worship* forms an important part of divine 'knowledge.' Several passages speak of it. "He is to be understood by the mind: therefore, my beloved disciple, pierce him by thy mind. OM is the bow: the soul is the arrow; and the supreme *Brahma* is the mark. Freed from error, by means of that bow of OM, pierce the mark BRAHMA by thine arrow-like soul. And as an arrow, having pierced the mark and entered it, is entirely hidden by it; so the soul having pierced *Brahma* and entered into him, shall be entirely hidden by him." (vii. 13, 14.) "He who may be known by OM, he is BRAHMA." (x. 1.) "Meditate on the

supreme who is to be known by OM, and without hinderance be delivered from the darkness of ignorance. The wise man, by means of the syllable OM, obtains the peaceful, undecaying, undying, fearless and mighty Brahma. We meditate upon the excellent wisdom and power of that supreme Debta, who gave birth to the world : and who sends to us the wealth of wisdom.”* Of this worship, thus expressed, *love* ought to be one element. In two passages only of the whole book, if we remember rightly, is this important idea laid down. “He is dearer than a son : dearer than wealth : and dearer than all things else.” “Worship the supreme Spirit as one beloved : if a man worships the supreme as one beloved, his beloved ones shall never die.”

Here it may be noticed, that what is enjoined as a duty in these passages of the *Bráhma Dharma* is, in outward form at least, observed among its disciples. In the weekly meeting of the Brahma Samáj, such worship is publicly celebrated. The following is a translation of one of the *Srútis* employed therein. “He who is the creator, preserver, and destroyer of this universe : who is the Lord of all pleasure and pain : who is the producer of my body, my life and all my prosperity, and is the internal spirit of all things, both fixed and moveable : HE is true, wise, eternal, Brahma supreme. Turning away my mind from all things, with singleness of heart and full of joy, I reverence him who is good. The all-pervading, formless, faultless god, who is of pure nature, all-wise, the pervader of all hearts, the most high, who manifests himself, the eternal God, decrees to all his subjects, in all time, the joy and sorrow which each deserves. By him have been created breath, reason, all the senses ; and ether, air, light, water, earth, all the moveable and immoveable. By his controlling power, in a proper way, fire blazes, the sun gives heat, the cloud pours down water, the wind drives for-

* The reader will recognise this last passage as part of the celebrated GÁYATRI. The translation of it in the *Bráhma Dharma* somewhat differs from that usually given by English Scholars.

ward, and death marches on." *Another prayer* is: "Thou supreme Spirit! Deliver us from sin caused by illusion: and separating us from evil purposes, make us earnest in obeying thy laws. Make us bold in meditating daily, with faith and love, on thine exceeding glory, supreme goodness and pure joy: that so we may by degrees be enabled to obtain eternal and perfect happiness." Again; a *morning prayer*: "Thou supreme Spirit! may I be influenced to accomplish my work in the world, according to thy command, for the benefit of men and for the love of thee."

The 'knowledge of Brahma,' thus associated with the contemplation of his qualities and the celebration of his worship, is sometimes described by other names. It is sometimes called, 'Gaining Brahma' and very often, 'Seeing Brahma:' terms which (as we learn from other sources) are here used in an entirely figurative sense. It only remains to point out the *external circumstances*, under which this knowledge is to be sought. In chapter vii. 15, 16, the Bráhma is taught that he must do as the ancient student of the Vedas did. He must sit in a smooth and pleasant solitude, near murmuring streams, where gentle breezes and soothing sounds may tranquillize his heart. With head erect; passions subdued; all earthly objects excluded; he must meditate profoundly upon Brahma, and 'make him the boat on which he will cross the sea of this world.' This passage was quoted in our last chapter from the *Swetáswatar Upanishad*. But the force of this discipline is much broken by another precept of a more spiritual kind. "The men who sin not with their reason, speech, works and thoughts, are they who really meditate. They who dry up their body (as the yogis), they do not meditate." (B. xv. 4.) Be this as it may, *preparation* must be made by the Brahmist, as by the followers of the Vedas. Thus: "The man who desists not from evil, nor refrains from the active exercise of the senses, whose mind is not held under restraint, and from desiring the reward of merits, enjoys no rest,—such a man will not possess Brahma merely

by knowing him." "To gain deliverance in the next world, gradually lay up virtue, as ants heap up ant-hills." (B. xvii. 4.)

There is one doctrine in relation to purification from sin, which deserves special mention, though it is laid down only once in the book. It contains the Deist theory of forgiveness : but the origin of the passage declaring it is not stated. "When a man has sinned and mourns over his fault, he is freed from it. Having declared he will do so no more, and really refraining from it, he becomes holy." (B. xvi. 8.)

SECTION 14.—*Of the Transmigration of Souls.*

The existence of a future world is distinctly and fully recognised by the *Bráhma Dharma* : but the TRANSMIGRATION of souls is a doctrine which it teaches clearly and from which its followers profess to derive comfort. "The man, who is ignorant and impure, gains not the rank of Brahma, but returns to the world. The wise man, having gained that dignity, is born no more." (xv. 6, 7.) "The man, who practises holiness.. puts on the life of a holy being." (B. xv. 2.) "The man who in this world is able to know God, accomplishes the object of his birth [as a man];.. having perceived God, he is removed entirely from this world and dies no more." (iv. 8.) In B. v. 12, we read of *mánab janma*, "birth as a man;" an expression always used in relation to transmigration.

On the subject of a future world, including that of transmigration, we may quote the following passage from one of the Bráhmist pamphlets. "Our religion inculcates that our good and bad actions shall all inevitably receive their proportionate reward and punishment, with the exception only of expiated sin, conformably to the exact extent which is necessary for the purpose of reformation and encouragement : that we shall thus have to pass a state of probation during successive lives of shorter or longer durations, until we are fitted

by sacred knowledge and entire devotion to the will of God, to enjoy that supreme felicity which may be said to be a participation of divine nature ; . . . that man is mercifully destined for everlasting happiness, but he is left to attain that ultimate object of his creation by knowledge and devotion, and by his labour in the ways of virtue and religion." (*Vedantic doctrines vindicated*, p. 42.)

SECTION 15.—*The future World.*

Beyond death, there are two species of worlds to which the souls of men are conveyed, according to their merits. We have already mentioned the *worlds*, 'bereft of joy and covered with dense darkness,' which become the portion of the ignorant and sinful, till their grossness is in a measure purged off and they are brought back to another body. But little else is said about them ; and what will eventually happen to the souls of the wicked, is a matter of doubt. One thing only is certain that their punishment is declared *not to be eternal*. (*Do.* p. 42.) For the good, and especially for those who 'know Brahma,' there are *worlds of delight*. Even while in this earth they are freed from sorrow and their desires are accomplished. They obtain a mighty moral power ; so that *the man whom they curse, is cursed* : "When a man loves another thing more than the supreme, if the worshipper of Brahma say to him, 'That which is dear to you shall be destroyed : ' he has a right to speak thus, and what he says shall surely come to pass." But the great results of their 'knowledge' are realized in the next world : different degrees of happiness being attached to different degrees of holiness : this fact is stated, but the details are not given. The *lower* degrees are enjoyed only for a time, in accordance with the individual's merit : but that merit exhausted, he is born again. The *highest* of all is that of a *constant abode* with Brahma in the most glorious heaven. "They believe that state of the soul, in which it exists as a

pure immaterial essence, divested of all corporeal connections, and yet possessing a consciousness of self-existence, to be a state resembling that of its creator God, who is without body and material qualities, and partaking of his wisdom and happiness, to be a state which is the reward of the highest piety and virtue." (*Patriká*, No. 51 ; p. 108.) "They who know God, die no more ;" i. e. by transmigration. Their course of wanderings ceases altogether. (iii. 13.) "By complete wisdom Brahma is obtained : the Rishis have so obtained him." (xiii. 1.) "They obtain Brahma and having entered into him, there abide." (i. 2.) "He who knows the supreme, becomes omniscient and enters into all things. (xvi. 16.) "Brahma is the cause of liberation (*mokhya*)." (xiv. 6.) "Desirous of liberation, I take refuge in that supreme." (7.) "He is the great bridge of liberation." (8.) The terms *mukti* and *mokhya* here employed, are those used in the Upanishads and Vedánt, to denote *absorption* into the supreme : and the above passage (xvi. 16) might certainly be used by an ancient Vedántist to denote the thorough identification of the soul with Brahma in his essence and his attributes. Such a doctrine the Brahmists have repudiated. "The rational Hindu believes. . . that the doctrine of an eternal hell is not consistent with our ideas of the justice and mercy of God ; and that there is a super-eminent stage of existence, superior to the *swargas* or heavens above mentioned, in which the righteous man enjoyeth all blisses with the intelligent God, placed above the alternations of joys and miseries attendant on this corporeal prison and this nether world." (*On Vedantism : by a Hindu.*) Such are the doctrines of modern Bráhmism, and the authority on which they are based.

It only remains briefly to enumerate the points in which these followers of the Vedas agree with, and differ from, the ancient schools. From the first it was evident that the opinions of the modern school had a close connection with

those of the ancient ones, and were in certain respects a modification of theirs. The constant reference to the same authorities ; the use of the same names ; and in particular the publication of several of the Upanishads, of the Sanhitás of the Rig Veda, and of the Vedánta Sár, all implied that whatever might be the differences between the systems, they had decidedly some points in common.

Their points of AGREEMENT seem to be as follows :

1. The modern Bráhmas recognise, with the ancient Vedántists, the *inspired authority of the Vedas*, in matters of religious truth : but they reject that of the *Vedánt Darsan* and *Bhagabat Gíta*, and deny also that the Vedas are eternal.

2. Their system has the same *aim* as the old Vedánt, viz. to communicate the knowledge of Brahma : *self-mortification* is declared to be a part of the preparatory discipline ; and the instructions of a *teacher* are necessary for a proper understanding of its dogmas.

3. The three systems allow that men are in a *state of darkness* ; that evil conduct and misery are the result ; and that a 'deliverance' is necessary.

4. The modern system uses the same *terms* as the older ones to denote *the supreme*, and ascribes to him many of the same attributes and acts.

5. It adopts and defends the doctrine of *transmigration*.

6. Though rather silent on the subject of *caste*, its members by no means attempt to innovate on the established system, but have joined others in its defence. They recognise as inspired the book which describes its origin ; though they do not, like that book, confine their system exclusively to the higher castes.

7. The Bráhmas, like the Vedánt, recognise the *usefulness of idol-worship* to the illiterate, who are unable to attain the higher and more efficacious way of 'wisdom.' We shall speak of this again hereafter.

8. They believe also with the Vedánt, in *several heavens* in which different degrees of happiness are enjoyed ; as well

as in *different hells* possessing various degrees of misery. In all these points the schools agree.

The DIFFERENCES, however, between them are very important and have been rendered more distinct by the efforts of the modern Society to prove that some of the rejected dogmas are not found in the Vedas at all. These differences are the following.

1. While all the ancient authorities teach *science* and *religion* on the same inspired authority, the Bráhmists *separate* these two branches of knowledge and confine their system to religion alone. In developing that system they claim the use of *reason*: which the Upanishads do not allow.

2. Unlike the Bráhma of the Vedánt, the *supreme God* of the Bráhmas is described as different from the works of his creation; as maintaining all by the decrees of his providence; and as possessing more decided moral attributes.

3. Hence they distinctly repudiate the *Pantheism* of the Vedas, and look on the supreme, not as the material, but as the efficient cause of the universe: not as *being* the universe, but as *ruling it*. "If by pantheism is meant, the opinion of those who consider God and the universe to be one and the same thing, or in other words, who believe that the Great First Cause is not distinct from other existences, and that the universe itself is God, we unhesitatingly assert that this is not the doctrine of the [modern] Vedánt. It is indeed this Pantheism that we have all along disclaimed, as not forming any part of our belief." (*Ved. doc. Vind.* p. 36.)

4. Man is also recognised as possessing an *independent soul*, able to judge of his creator, of himself, his condition and prospects; impressible by motives; exerting affections; and able to choose for himself between courses of good and evil.

5. Brahminism thoroughly differs from the old Vedánt, in recognising a *moral system*: including the duties of man towards his creator, his fellow-men and to himself: duties which arise from his relation to them, and which his constitution enables him to fulfil.

6. Among these moral relations, those of the *family* have been especially mentioned; including the duty of female education and marrying daughters only at a proper age.

7. *Sin* is considered, not as a defect in physical constitution, but as a *moral fault*, consisting in the neglect of known duties, or the commission of forbidden crimes.

8. It is declared that *virtue* also is moral, and that a 'wise' man, seeking the supreme, ought to be holy in his practice.

9. Brahminism *repudiates* the doctrine of *absorption* and affirms that the souls of the best reside not *in* Brahma, but *with* Brahma and will enjoy happiness for ever.

Thus viewed, the doctrines of Bráhmism will be found to differ but little from those of the ordinary Deistic systems: although the Vedas, by which they are said to be confirmed, are declared to be inspired. We would close this chapter by observing that there are some among the professed followers of Bráhmism who hold the assertion of the inspiration of the Vedas to be of little worth. But whether members of the society or not, there is a large number of educated men, in and around Calcutta, who give up such a theory altogether, and fall back upon the *works of nature alone*, for the religious and moral instructions which they desire. These DEISTS or disciples of nature, are not, however, all of one mind. Some of them maintain the immateriality and immortality of the soul: others as strenuously deny these doctrines. The views of all these schools, ancient and modern; Vedántic and Vedic; Bráhma and Deist, will now pass under examination and be subjected to a common test.

PART II.

THESE SYSTEMS ARE NOT OF DIVINE ORIGIN.

IN estimating the value of any system, whether philosophical or religious, it is a matter of congratulation to both its friends and opposers, that we must be guided by certain PRINCIPLES of ENQUIRY, which are acknowledged by all men to be the ultimate test of truth. These principles have been implanted by the Creator in the mind of man ; they lie at the root of his knowledge ; they are the very conditions on which he thinks and feels ; and without them he would not be a man at all. By their aid he carries on his multifarious engagements in the world. By their aid he can discern truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, right and wrong. By their aid he can calculate, weigh, reason, judge of probabilities, learn from experience, and trace out causes and effects, with the connections between them. By their aid he judges the moral qualities of actions ; the fruits of actions ; the laws of actions. By them he finds out what is and what is not ; that is, he finds out truth ; be it in the intellectual, moral, or religious world ; be it in the past, present or future : be it in the world of men, or the more awful world of spirits. Perhaps there is nothing more wonderful in the known universe than the structure of the human mind, and the adaptation of its powers to the sphere wherein it dwells. It has an *intellect* for the acquisition and employment of knowledge : *feelings* by which that knowledge affects it ; and a *will* to carry out the course of action, which its judgment, feelings and moral principles desire or deem wise. The *intellect* attains its ends by certain powers which it employs as its agents. By *perception* it acquires knowledge ; by *memory* it lays it up in store ; by *recollection* it calls it forth for use ; by *imagination* it holds it up in consciousness for contemplation ; by *judg*

ment it elaborates that knowledge, reasons upon it and deduces conclusions. The *feelings* are of varied kinds called up by varied circumstances: and in accordance with them and with the mind's convictions, the *will* forms its purposes and carries them out. But none of these powers could act without something to begin with; something *on* which, as an unshaken foundation, all human experience may be built. Hence every human *intellect* possesses some few original and native notions; and every human *will* starts with a few fundamental principles as its standard of right and wrong. Neither can these powers act merely from caprice. The judgment reasons according to certain laws of thought written in its very constitution; the laws of morality, and the commands of the Creator have been provided for the guidance of the will. Thus when we state that *of two contradictories, one must be false*; and that *every effect has some adequate cause*; or declare that *lying cannot be right, nor theft be harmless*; we fall back upon fundamental notions of the mind which in many cases prove the ultimate appeal in reasoning. Several such notions are contained in the mind, and they form a sure foundation on which without error the gigantic superstructure of all human knowledge is built.

It is in connection with, and as deduced from, such principles, that the *mode* of philosophical enquiry, and the *spirit* which ought to guide it, have been clearly defined by philosophers. If it be true that no effects can be greater than their causes; and that no conclusions can be drawn beyond the facts whence they are deduced, then there can be but one possible method in philosophy, which, if truly observed, must lead us solely to correct results. Whether in science, morals or religion, the method of enquiry is the same: only its objects differ. In this method we have two processes, the counterparts of one another, both of which are required before any examination can be deemed complete and sound. *Analysis* will exhibit all the principles which are contained in a mass of facts. *Synthesis* will take those principles or simple

elements, will reconstruct them, deduce from them their legitimate conclusions, and shew whether we arrive at the exact point whence we started, and whether, therefore, our analysis was perfectly correct. No philosophy can be truly such, unless it will bear the most ample test of these fundamental modes of enquiry. Every thing must be tried in their crucible. The science and philosophy of ancient days in Europe were submitted to it and were found woefully wanting. The ancient philosophy of Hindustan must undergo the same trial. All religious systems must submit to it. The Sánkhyā, Vedānta and Nyáy philosophies: Purānism; the tenets of the Boishtobs and the Tantras of Shiva: Mahommedanism, Buddhism, the Parseeism of Zoroaster: the idolatries of the debased, and the Christianity of the enlightened nations of the world, must all pass under these tests: and only that system can be declared *true* which can bear them thoroughly and to the last.

Acting on this method we find that TRUE SCIENCE will give us a correct description of natural phenomena as they really exist, neither falling short of, nor going beyond them. In true RELIGION the feelings, the understanding, the will, the conscience of men must be recognised: the relations between God and man, between man and his fellows, fully described, and the duties arising from them be justly enforced. As God must be a God of truth, any book which comes from him must teach authoritatively only truth, truth in science, truth in religion; truth, the first elements of which the very constitution of man contains. The book of revelation must never contradict the book of creation. It may confirm, it may go beyond it: but it *must not* contradict it: for the Author of both is the same, "God over all, blessed for ever."

These principles are learned from fundamental truths, which God has implanted in our constitution; which are the very conditions of our existence as men: and which thus form the divinely established basis on which all our knowledge is to be built. Without such a basis, without such a

starting point, men could never have learned any thing; much less could they have learned alike, and come to similar conclusions. Without it, if they could have judged at all, they would have referred to different standards of judgment, have had different modes of trying questions and of course have had no common ground of union and agreement. But because all men have it, their mental constitution is the same everywhere : men of all countries, of all ranks, of all degrees of education, of all kinds of employment, reason on the same principles and submit their conclusions to the same test. However confined, however imperfect their reasonings may be, the laws of reasoning are the same ; and did not prejudices, passions and ignorance interfere, the same truths, the same reasonings, would bring the *same conviction* to all hearts. In this wonderful arrangement we find an illustrious instance of the wisdom and goodness of God. Under his blessing it forms the means, by which the human mind, surrounded by errors, by falsehood, confusion and doubt, can really discern with some exactness, what is and what is not the truth ; and to prove that the arrangement is His, we shall shew hereafter that he himself appeals to it to confirm his words.

In prosecuting our enquiry, upon these principles, into the systems described in the preceding chapters, we shall merely select some of their distinguishing doctrines, and by examining them, exhibit the general character of the systems in which they are authoritatively taught.

SECTION I.—THE VEDAS ARE NOT A REVELATION FROM GOD.

In relation to all systems of religion, the first questions naturally asked are such as these : *What is your authority ? Whence is that authority derived ?* Has this religion a *divine origin* or is it the *offspring of human reason* ? Is it from man only, or is it revealed by God ? In the present case, these questions have met with a distinct answer. The *Vedānta Darsan* claims to exhibit revealed truth ; inasmuch as it expounds the doctrines of the Vedas, and is the work of an

inspired author. The *Upanishads*, as we have seen, boldly assert that they contain the doctrine taught by Brahma himself. *Brahmism* joins with them in these assertions and bases itself upon their authority. Thus the three systems meet in one point and are unanimous in one doctrine, that the *VEDAS* are a REVELATION from the supreme. The older systems offer no proof of so important a fact; they take the matter for granted, and never seem to suspect that it may be questioned. The *Bráhmas*, however, have been more explicit: and in more than one instance have offered reasons for their belief. The fullest defence of their opinion is contained in the pamphlet called *Vedántic doctrines vindicated*, pp. 29—35: a brief outline of it is as follows: (1) "The Vedas having existed from a time when Indian literature, and indeed all literature, was only, as it were, in a state of germination, *it is impossible to prove the divine origin of the sacred books by any historical testimonies*, the value of which was not understood at the time." (2) The *only* evidence of it is "what they themselves afford, by the *drift and tendency*, the *reasonableness and cogency* of the doctrines taught in them." (3) Still the *belief and tradition of ages* "give our early writings a *degree of credibility* at least equal to that to which any ancient history can lay claim." (4) "What authority *could* they offer besides that which they do actually possess?" (5). "The *names of the Rishis* who were inspired are given; and that is all the information that we have or need on the subject. Proofs of the inspiration of these sages may be collected from the Vedas themselves as well as from unanimous traditions; hence,—*we have proofs in abundance of our sages having been inspired.*" (6) There is no historical proof of the truth of any religion. The Bible history is like the works of Herodotus and contains a mixture of truth and falsehood.. "*To prove the authority and truth [of ancient writings] by any extraneous evidence is impossible.*" Neither the Jewish Testament nor the Koran can lay any claim to any historical proofs in vindication of their heavenly

origin. *History strictly so termed had its rise at a much later time.*" (7) "*Mysteries do not come within the plan of revelation.*" (8) "*Religion requires nothing that is uncongenial to our mind.*" (9) "*The knowledge derived from the source of inspiration deals with eternal truths, which require no other proof than what the whole creation and the mind of man unperverted by fallacious reasonings, afford in abundance.*" It is unnecessary to examine minutely every branch of this strange argument, a compound of ignorance, error, gratuitous assumptions and self-contradiction. '*The Vedas cannot have any other than internal proofs of their being revealed; and yet we have other proofs in abundance*'! A few remarks will suffice: the best refutation of the argument being the bare statement of it.

1. If the *tradition and belief of ages is sufficient* to prove an ancient writing to be inspired: then, we must believe its *whole contents* are inspired. We must receive the *Sútras* of Vyás and the *Bhagabat Gitá* as inspired: for they are of the same age as the Vedas; they were studied in the same schools: their names are always joined with the Vedas on Vedántic questions, and to this day, they enjoy among Hindu pandits the credit of a divine origin. The other five Darsans claim the same honour on the same ground. More than this, tradition and firm belief prove the truth of the Puráns and of the Tantras; and that this is not our deduction only from such premises, the following extract from the writings of Rámmohan Roy will shew: "*The Puráns and Tantras are of course to be considered as shástras; for they repeatedly declare God to be one and above the apprehension of the senses.*" The same argument shews the inspiration of the *Koran*; and from the great extent of both tradition and belief in its favour *proves incontestibly the perfect truth of the Bible.*

2. That there *is no* historical proof for the inspiration of the Vedas, and that there *can be* none either for them or any other shástra, are merely dogmatic assertions unsustained by any reasoning. They somewhat resemble the argument of a

celebrated mathematician who proved to the satisfaction of many minds that steamers could not be made large enough and strong enough to cross the Atlantic ocean. Or they may be compared to the algebraical problem which is to prove from undoubted reasons that the large hand of a clock can never overtake the small one. Such reasonings and such assertions are instantly overturned by *a single fact*. Steamers cross the Atlantic every day. The minute-hand of a clock passes the hour-hand eleven times in twelve hours : and there are many facts which shew that God has given a revelation to man. How is it possible for any one to prove the assertion that *no* historical testimony can prove *a fact*—the fact of a revelation.

The reasons advanced in defence of these arguments are no better than the arguments themselves. Strange is it to find a writer of educated mind, utterly unable to comprehend the nature and use of testimony ; and so ignorant as to assert that authentic history does not begin till after the time of Mahommed. He seems to consider that by ‘ historical evidence ’ is meant the history *of* a fact not the evidence *for it*. A few remarks on that subject, therefore, will not be out of place. The principles which guide us in investigating the claims of religion are the same as those which we adopt in a court of justice to prove our title to an estate, or fix the guilt of a murder. They are the principles of *evidence* ; the proofs that a fact *is* or *is not*. Such proofs are of two kinds. In the case of a robbery, there may be the evidence of those who saw the robbery : and found the spoil on the thief’s person : or there may be the declaration and confession of the party himself. The two kinds of evidence are not necessarily connected. One may exist without the other : but where both exist together, the proof must be considered perfect. In the same way, when a book or an individual asserts as a fact, ‘ I am sent from God,’ that fact must be proved. The *mere claim* is nothing : that claim must be supported. If the book teach what God only can really know, it exhibits inter-

nal evidence of the truth of its claim : and if an individual, making the same claim, is able in support of that claim, plainly to do what God only can do, we are bound to believe him. All men act on these principles : they are nothing new. The Vedas claim to be received and honoured as books revealed by God. But they offer *no proof* of the claim. Tradition repeats that claim, but likewise presents *no proof*. What is the result ? Jotee Prasad claims a large sum of money from the East India Company ; but unless he prove his claim will they pay him ?

3. The only argument left is that *the contents of the Vedas are sufficient proof of their divine origin*. It is thus stated by a late writer. "Besides the cogency and reasonableness of doctrines, no religion of the earth can furnish any other kind of proof of its having proceeded from God. Truth of whatever kind must proceed from him, who is the fountain of all truth and who sends down truth into the hearts of men ; and it is reasonable to infer that the Vedas as depositories of truth have proceeded from God."* The writer of this strange sentence seems to have but an indistinct notion of what 'truth' is, otherwise he could not have penned a sentiment which proves far more than ever he intended. In its ordinary acceptation in the English language, the word **TRUTH** denotes simply 'the undeniable statement of a fact,' of something that is, has been, or will be. It may refer to a fact in physical science, in natural history, in morals, or in religion. It may be a fact in national, social or domestic life. It may refer to things on earth, or to things in the invisible world : to things which we learn by the testimony of our senses, by the testimony of men or by the testimony of God. Facts proved by this last kind of testimony are called by Christian writers, 'revealed truths.' But according to 'a Hindu,' *all statements of facts* are such, of whatever kind, and from whatsoever source. Provided they be true statements, all are from God, and all are inspired. On this ground, Euclid's

* On Vedántism by a Hindu, p. 13.

Elements of Geometry is a 'revelation ;' it being pure truth. De Morgan's *Arithmetic* ; Dr. Carpenter's *Physiology* ; Whately's *Logic* ; Lyell's *Geology* and Lennie's *Grammar* are divine revelations. Herodotus, Xenophon, the public Newspapers, and above all the BIBLE can claim the same honour. For they contain undeniable accounts of what has been or is or will be ; and if not wholly correct, they are revealed *so far* as they are true. This is all the reason given to prove the inspiration of the Vedas, by one, who while he rejects the Bible and laughs at its evidence from history, miracles, prophecy ; from its pure morality and its perfect love to man ; while he scorns the doctrine of an incarnate Redeemer and of salvation through an atoning sacrifice ; while he ridicules a day of judgment and the resurrection to eternal life—receives as *true*, as *inspired*, these antiquated Vedas, with their strange cosmogony, their pantheism and absorption into Brahm, and thus receives them for *such a* reason. May we not indeed say of men like this ; "Ye blind guides ; ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." In them is fulfilled the word ; "Hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive ; for the heart of this people is waxed gross and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and repent and be healed." "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

It is allowed then, by the advocates of Vedic inspiration, that the Vedas *possess no proof* from history that they have been revealed by the supreme, and that they *cannot have* any. They are inspired because "they are depositaries of truth" and their doctrines are "reasonable and cogent." In the course of these discussions we hope to show that the most important of these doctrines are neither the one nor the other.

SECTION 2.—DIFFICULTIES IN STUDYING THE VEDAS.

The severe process prescribed by the Upanishads to those who would obtain the knowledge of Brahma, proves that their plan of 'liberation' has not been formed by a merciful God. This process is also enjoined in the *Sûtras* and *Gîtâ*, and is repeated by the *Brâhma Dharma* : all the systems therefore must bear the odium attaching to it. This process includes, as we have seen, the proper performance of all the ritual ceremonies enjoined in the Vedas, whether daily or special services ; it includes the study of the Vedâs and Vedângas, which constitute an immense body of antique learning. It requires the thorough subjugation of all the passions and desires of man, whether directed to lawful or unlawful objects. Hunger and thirst : cold and heat : pleasure and pain, must all be disregarded : the endearments of family connections, the desire of gain, a regard for good and evil, must all be laid aside. The explanation of the Upanishads must be received from a teacher, and the student must meditate and meditate thereon, in some retired solitude, until he loses all belief in his individual existence, in that of the outward world, and of his relation to it, and perceives that he himself is a part and parcel of the one supreme !

Can the religions which prescribe such rules be derived from the God of all goodness ? Does nature teach that such a course is either wise or beneficial ? Assuredly not. For *first*, any rich *individual* who possessed the leisure to do so, would find it excessively difficult to submit himself to the bodily mortifications, the crushing of the passions, the abnegation of self above commanded. How much less then will the poor, the illiterate, whose leisure is small, whose understanding is limited, and who are destitute of scholastic learning, perform the thousandth part of the heart-crushing task. *Secondly* : so long as human nature remains what it is, it is utterly impossible for the mind, consistently and continually, to yield assent to the pantheistic doctrines taught in the Upanishads. Hence

they who, at one time, assert these doctrines, are found at another practically denying them. Even the Brahmagyáni recognises the rights of property, the value of money and the influence of praise. Thirdly: the full carrying out of such a system of study (were it possible) would *immediately destroy* society. If all men were seized with a desire to know Brahma, (an excellent thing, according to the shewing of the shastras,) society must stand still. Who will till the ground; who will tend cattle; who will manufacture; who will trade, when *all* must retire to meditate in solitudes and secret places? Who will marry; who will govern; who will be masters; who will be servants: when pleasure and pain, heat and cold, good and evil are all laid aside as vanity. The world would be wholly ruined.

Is it possible that the Bountiful Creator, who is 'goodness personified,' can have invented and commanded a monstrous scheme like this: which the poor, by far the great majority of men, can never perform; and which even the rich and learned find it almost impossible to obey: which contradicts the constituent elements of our very nature, and which it would ruin society to carry out. Is that *His* scheme, whose rules belong to an exclusive few, while myriads cannot bear them. Is that His divine feast of eternal mercy, which is reserved for a few pampered lords, while millions upon millions starve and perish. Nature teaches no such insulting doctrine: it teaches THAT A RELIGION WHICH CANNOT BE UNIVERSAL, CANNOT BE FROM GOD.

SECTION 3.—VEDIC SCIENCE.

The admirers of the ancient Vedánt feel that the scientific portions of the Upanishads and of the Sútras do no great honour to an inspired system. Hence they are careful to tell us: "The Hindu system of philosophy [was] first taught by the celebrated Veda Vyása and is totally unconnected with the principles of belief cherished by ourselves and our fellow-

believers in the truth of the Vedánt." (*Ved. doc. Preface.*) "Our philosophy is not our religion." But against any forced separation of the two subjects in the case of the Vedas and other shastras, we enter a most decided protest. Even among European philosophers, philosophy and religion are not separated altogether. Philosophy is the genus of which Religion is a species, cognate with Morals and other branches of Ethics: while the same principles of evidence are employed to ascertain both, and what is false in the one will never be allowed true in the other. Much less can the two subjects be separated in our present enquiry. The writers of the Upanishads knew no distinction which would enable a student to say of one part of a treatise, 'That is philosophy;' and of another 'This is religion:' 'That I reject; this I choose.' To them all knowledge is *one*, and bears upon the knowledge of Brahma: and that they made no attempt to separate the branches of knowledge into inspired and uninspired, any candid mind that reads the Upanishads will at once allow. The subjects taught in the Vedánt Darsan and in the Upanishads are taught together, as branches of one science. The student is equally ignorant of all: the master is equally instructed in all: and he delivers his instructions with authority. He does *not* teach them indirectly, implying that such were the opinions current in his day, but he teaches them *directly* as an authoritative description of facts. Thus in the *Katha*, Yama speaks of Swarga and Brahma-lok in the same way as that in which he tells his pupil how to get there: and similarly tells him *as a fact* the connection between the human heart and brain. In the *Mundaka*, Angirás tells Sounaka about the structure of the world with the same authority as he tells him of the supreme rewards of Brahma-gyán. The two branches of knowledge co-exist. The science of the Vedas and their religion must stand or fall together: the same authority sustains them both.

1. In examining the scientific views of the Vedantic systems, we will begin with *Vyas's theory of digestion*, as de-

scribed in the *Sûtras*. 'Corn and other earthly products become flesh: the finer particles nourish the mind. Water is converted into blood: the finer particles support the breath. Oil and other combustible substances become marrow; the coarser part is deposited as bone, the finer nourish the faculty of speech.' How far this statement is true and revealed, as Pundits say the Darsan is, let us judge by comparing it with the account given, of the Physiology of Digestion, by modern medical scholars who have, through Anatomy, traced it with their own eyes. All kinds of food, they tell us, of whatsoever nature, whether animal or vegetable, are formed into only one substance, **THE BLOOD**, and from that blood are produced all the varieties of objects, contained in every animal system. That food, whatsoever it be, when received into the stomach, is subject to the action of a fluid there, called the gastric juice, by which it is formed into a soft mass, called *chyme*. The chyme passes on from the stomach into the first part of the intestines and is subjected to the action of two juices, from the liver and the pancreas, the former of which is known as *bile*. By these it is separated into two parts; the one, a pure white fluid termed *chyle*, is taken up by various vessels, by which it is conveyed to the heart, and thence to the lungs where it becomes pure blood; the other is ejected from the body as a useless residue. Amid the various wonders of the animal frame, one of the most wonderful, one which exhibits in the most striking way the resources of the Creator, is the fact that the *same kind of nutriment* is extracted from a thousand varieties of food, some of which are opposite to one another. There is no animal or vegetable product which may not become the food of some kind of living creature; and those plants which are poison to some are wholesome and delicious food to others. Again that blood, which is thus formed from all species of food, affords to every part of the body its appropriate nourishment. To bone the blood furnishes bone; to muscle, the elements of muscle; to nerves it gives the element of nerve; to skin, it gives skin;

to vessels, vessels : and thus as each part gradually decays, by the aid of the same material, blood, each part is reproduced. *How* the wonder arises, mortal men know not : but the fact they see every day. Vyás's theory is very different from this.

2. The philosophy of the Upanishads is no better than that of the *Sútras*. Thus, in describing the *regions of the universe*, they tell us, the nearest to the earth is the sun : next the moon ; beyond that the region of lightning : beyond that the region of rain. Shall we stop to prove the contrary ?

3. Again it is said, *rain* comes from *the moon* and returns to the moon : the *moon*, at the conjunction, *disappears within the sun* ; the *sun* is produced from *fire*, including the golden man inside it ; and fire from air. Lightning comes from rain. This is revealed Meteorology !

4. The Upanishads are not more successful in their views of Chemistry. Like the old cosmogonies of the Greeks, they teach that every thing is made from five primary elements. Of these *ether* is not known to exist at all : and the remaining four, so far from being primary elements, are all *compounds* of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, &c.

5. One curious theory in *human physiology*, taught by Yama to Nachiketa in the *Katha*, is worth mentioning. "A hundred and one arteries issue from the heart, and the main among them proceeds through the brain." The description given of the heart by modern anatomists is very different from this. The correct number of veins and arteries which enter and issue from the heart is seven ; and their uses are clearly defined. Two of them bring into the right auricle of the heart the impure venous blood gathered from all parts of the body ; two others carry the same blood from the heart into the lungs, where it is purified : two others carry back the pure blood into the heart again ; and thence it is forced by the *aorta*, the seventh and chief artery, throughout the body. The temporal arteries, which branch from the aorta, do indeed supply the brain with blood ; but they are *two* in

number and proceed to the sides of the brain, the temples, not through its centre: least of all do they constitute a solitary tube through which the soul travels from the heart straight to the suture of the scull, where it is said to leave the body.

We might say more about the Vedic theory of dreaming, about the 'five vital airs,' together with that of 'winking;' about the three 'cases' of the soul, and so on, but it is unnecessary. Such is the science of the Vedas. The *Bráhma Dharma* of course contains no such foolish passages; but with great inconsistency it commands its disciples to study the whole round of Vedic science, including its astronomy, accentuation, prosody and the like: while its followers declare the Vedas to be 'reasonable and cogent.' *Think of a man being told to learn grammar and prosody, with a view to the salvation of his soul!* The views of science now described were not at all unnatural in the early age when they were formed. The ancestors of Europeans knew not half so much. As an ancient curiosity they are worth our study; but when we are told that the supreme God himself revealed them to the Rishis who originally taught them, we shrink back in horror from an error so awful. For, apart from all revelation, these views can be proved to be utterly unsound, by uninspired men whose mere eyes and human skill have taught them better.

SECTION 4.—THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA.

As shown in our first chapter, on the Vedántism of Vyás, the doctrine that the whole universe is unreal and the offspring of illusion, was openly taught only by the later school of Vedantists, and we see it fully developed in the *Vedánta Sár*. As however, it is a doctrine necessitated by the pantheistic assertions of the Vedas and Sútras and must be really true if they are true, it may be useful to say a word or two on the subject. According to this doctrine,

then, the world in which we dwell, which we recognize by our senses, on whose objects we exert our intellect, and whose elements we move at will, is unreal; it appears to be but is not. It is purely a creature of the imagination produced by that illusion or *Máyá* which is acting throughout the creation and is thus cheating and deceiving the supreme himself. "The illusive power of ignorance produces the universe from the egg of *Brahma*." That glorious sun which enlignens the world is a mock sun; the moon is no better than a cheese; the sublime and stupendous sea, the glory of the world, has no existence: the mountains, rivers, lovely landscapes, the forests and woods with their warbling choristers are illusory; the mighty beasts that roam the unbounded wilds, or submit with patience to the rule of man, are spectral shadows. The mighty cities with their palaces for the rich, and hovels for the poor; their marts of commerce; buildings for works of art: their courts of justice: their institutions of benevolence, are all a lie. The relationships of society, father and son, husband and wife, rulers and subjects, masters and servants; of fellow-citizens, companions and friends: with all the important and solemn duties which those relationships involve; the pleasure and prosperity which attend them: the restraints of law, the instructions of science, the pleasures of piety; all that is wise, all that is holy, all that is good: are a **GIGANTIC LIE**. *The whole universe is a gigantic lie, and the Liar is the supreme Brahma!* What a system of philosophy for a rational man to believe! and yet there are many in Bengal who profess to believe it at this very hour.

1. Only two observations need be made on the doctrine, important though it is. The *first* is; that it represents the *Supreme* in the most *insulting light*. These various objects in the universe, which attract so much attention from us, are only appearances which He produces for his own sport. These illusive scenes are the result of his power; these sportive acts are performed by him. Whatever be their character, whether solemn, trivial, immoral or profane, He performs them

for sport to Himself. Be they acts of devotion ; of magnanimity, of benevolence ; or of grossest impurity, most shocking profanity and harshest cruelty, it matters not ; He has done them all. Words of kindness, witty speeches, and foul-mouthed blasphemy must all be attributed to Him and be declared to have originated in his illusive sport. Does nature teach us thus to blaspheme the supreme and Almighty God ?

2. Secondly. This doctrine so thoroughly *contradicts* the conditions of man's thinking that it is impossible for him to believe it. A man may truly say : ' If my consciousness is deceived by Máyá, how am I to know it ? My very knowledge itself is illusion ; all things within me, as well as around me, are products of illusion, deception and error. How then can I know them to be such ? The knowledge of the illusion is itself an illusion : the power which recognises the confusion is itself confused.' A thoroughly insane man can never be believed in any thing : least of all should we recognize his judgment if he declared ' I am thoroughly insane.' To make the assertion on good grounds requires a large amount of sagacity and reason : and the man, who can carefully judge all his acts, character and condition, and deliberately conclude ' I am in every respect insane,' belies by such a deliberate act the conclusion at which he has arrived. In the same way, the fact that Vedantists of the old school deliberately say ' Every thing is Máyá' is itself a proof to the contrary. It is a proof that there is within them as men, something which can, without deceiving itself, recognize and examine the condition of the universe and of the circumstances in which we live. It is a proof that within them there is something fixed amidst general uncertainty : a power which can pronounce an affirmative judgment in the midst of delusion and error. Hence the knowing mind denies the illusion altogether : and the effort to deny it proves it is untrue. If I can see the uncertainty of other things, I must in myself be *so far* certain.

3. A third difficulty, akin to the above, is this. If the doctrine of a universal *máyá* be really true, how is that illu-

sion to be cured : how is it that the knowledge of Brahma can be communicated to those whose every act, thought and word are involved in the illusion ; and above all, how is it possible that the beings so involved can take up a lengthened, continuous and most painful course of study in order to get out of it. This is a difficulty which the Vedánt does not explain. But it is insuperable : and the fact, that it exhorts its disciples to take up that course, that it furnishes a complete system of truth, and incites them to go onward by hope of reward, implies that, in relation to man himself, it cannot afford to apply its own doctrine. In other words the requirements of the system prove that, as far as he is concerned, the doctrine of *Máyá* must be untrue.

SECTION 5.—PANTHEISM.

“The charge of Pantheism,” says ‘*a Hindu*,’ “has been so often urged against the Vedánta and that too with so little reason, that the public is sick of it.” It matters little whether the Bráhmist public is sick of the charge or not. The real question is *whether the charge is true*. The most eminent Sanskrit scholars in Europe have asserted that it is, and we have endeavoured to prove it distinctly ; not by one or two isolated passages from the Upanishads, (such as those brought on the other side, all of which are quite consistent with the Vedántic theory) but by a large number of quotations from different parts, including the illustrations which those very writings employ to explain it. The doctrine of the *final absorption* of all things into Brahma is confirmatory of pantheism and is indeed a branch of it. This dogma is taught by the words ‘absorbed’ (*lina*) ‘return to him :’ ‘loses name and form :’ ‘dissolved into him’ and so on ; the references to which have already been laid before the reader. The doctrine is further confirmed by the passages which teach that the creation takes up *one fourth* of the substance of Brahma. The mere mention of such a doctrine is almost

sufficient to procure its condemnation among men of reflection ; so thoroughly does it contradict the notions and feelings of daily life. Earth, water, spiders, rats and cats, as well as intellectual men and women are all Brahma ! How human nature shrinks back from so revolting an assertion.

1. Our *first* objection to it is that it is *virtual Atheism*. By raising all created objects, the meanest as well as the most elevated, to the high rank of the supreme God, it virtually degrades him to their low position and annihilates that distinction between creator and created, which is the basis of all religion and all sound morality. It annihilates the relation sustained by all creatures towards Him, the duties thereby established and the motives by which they are enforced. It brings therefore sinful men to the awful conclusion ; ‘There is no God, separate from us, whose behests we are bound to obey.’

2. It *destroys all the distinctions* which prevail in human society, between man and man, between men and things. The various ranks and society, of ruler and subject, rich and poor, master and servant, father and son, wise and ignorant, honoured and scorned, must all be laid aside : all human beings must stand on a common level, claiming not merely a common origin but a common substance. Not only so, the carpenter is the same as his tools ; the potter differs not from his wheel, his mud and his store of pottery ; the brazier is of the same substance as his metals and the vessels which he forms : the washerman and his clothes are alike : and the blacksmith must confess himself on a level with his fire, hammer and anvil. The rider is no better than his horse ; the householder than his dog ; the housewife than her pots and pans. Is this a just description of the teaching of nature ? Or has God taught such things concerning himself ? Never.

3. The dogma directly *contradicts the individual consciousness* of every rational being. Every act and every notion of which we are conscious, implies to us that we differ from

other things and other beings. A thousand times a day we act on the conviction that there is a world without us, in which we move, among beings like ourselves, and of which we are singly independent. We are conscious of differences between our states of mind at various periods. We feel we are not machines, but living, moving, intelligent men : acting for reasons, working out those reasons, able to calculate consequences and to prepare for them. We do not act from compulsion ; but we choose between different courses of conduct, feel ourselves independent, and sometimes pride ourselves on our self-will. We see others also acting like ourselves, free in their thoughts, their speech and their conduct, responsible indeed, but free to choose. We see myriads of objects around us, which we use for our daily profit, and every thought concerning them implies a mental affirmation that we and they differ from one another. The pantheistic theory requires us to believe ourselves on a level with stones and other inert matter. Every moment of active existence denies the assertion, not in one human being only but in all : not in one land only but in all countries ; not in one age only but in all ages of the world from the beginning to the present day. If there be one thing believed among men more than any other, established by universal experience and universally acted on, it is this, that men have a free will and that in accordance with that will, they act. They are men, not Brahma. The right of property ; the mutual acknowledgment that there is such a thing as ' mine ' and ' thine ; ' the right of freedom ; of public protection to life and limb, are standing memorials against such a dogma ; and are utterly inconsistent with it. One or other of the two must fall.

Even did no other reasons exist for questioning the inspiration of the Vedas, the assertion by them of this gigantic error would of itself be sufficient to disprove the claim. A work which so insults the supreme God, which so contradicts the acknowledged distinctions between men and things, and violates the very first conditions of individual consciousness ; in

other words, which denies that truth which He has written in the works both of His intelligent and inanimate creation, cannot have sprung from Him.

SECTION 6.—THE MORALITY OF PANTHEISM.

There is one consequence of pantheistic system which we consider worthy of special mention, because of its great importance. It is that it can acknowledge NO MORAL RULES. It must, if consistent, deny to man those *moral feelings*, by which he may be affected in relation to the qualities of actions, and also those *moral laws* by which his will is to be regulated in their performance. It will disallow both his feelings and his conscience. In accordance with this deduction we find that the Upanishads are especially defective on this vital share of man's constitution. They speak exceedingly little about the relation of man to God, of man to his fellows, of the moral qualities of actions and of his power of discerning them. We find no royal law, simple, grand and comprehensive, that may serve to guide all nations in the path of truth. Nor could we expect otherwise. Pantheism implies that whatsoever is done by any being, man or animal, is done not by that being, but by the creator : for that being is a portion of himself. The thief is no thief : the Being who steals in his person is the creator : the liar is no liar : the murderer no murderer : the adulterer is not really vile. The love we feel, the hate, the joy, the pain ; the hopes, the fears, and other emotions of which we are conscious, are all illusive and have no real existence. *Good and evil* are all done by *Him* : and as it is only He who does them on Himself, morality and religion, right and wrong are really *non-entities*. *The shastras themselves recognise this as a legitimate inference from their great doctrine*. Thus the *Gîtâ* says ; (p. 13.) "Throw every deed on me ; and with a candid heart resolve to fight." In the *Brahma Sûtras* (iii. 2.) Vyâs having shown from various Srûtis of the Vedas that the supreme Brahma pervades all

things like the ether, and that his pervading power exists only on the supposition that there is no difference between Brahma and the universe, concludes thus : (38. 41.) "The Vedas declare that *Brahma is the cause of virtue and vice*, as of every thing else." Again in ii. 3. 41. he quotes the passage which we have given in chapter second from the *Kaushit Upanishad*, in which it is said that Brahma incites men both to good and evil, and then adds, "If God incites one man to do good and another to do evil, no fault is chargeable on him." Thus both the *Upanishads* and the *Sútras* assert the same doctrine. Again they say ; "God is not pained by the troubles of the soul, nor does he rejoice in their happiness : this is the doctrine of the *Gítá* and other *Smritis*." Men are similarly unfeeling : they are not affected by each other's sorrows. "As by the trembling of one reflection of the sun in water, other reflected images do not tremble ; so while souls are the reflected images of God, the pleasures and pains of one soul are not perceived by another." Vyás might have added that the same doctrine is taught in the *Katha Upanishad* (vii.) "The internal spirit of all that is is not affected by the miseries of men." The natural result of such callous teaching, must be to deaden all sensibility to the misfortunes of others, to destroy all mutual kindness and mutual sympathy between friends and neighbours, and deprive them of that counsel and aid which are so beneficial to all classes of men in times of distress. A notable illustration of such a result is seen in the heartless and unfeeling advice given by Krishna to Arjún before the battle of Kurukhetra. He exhorts him to go boldly and fight against his relatives and benefactors, without any reference to the justice of his cause, because he cannot hurt their souls and they must die at some time or other !

1. The *one great fact* in human nature which *disproves* these deductions from Pantheism is, that man is born with a moral sense, and that he *possesses a conscience* which compels him to make a distinction between right and wrong. How-

ever imperfectly that conscience may be developed ; however much instruction and habit may lead it astray, all men possess it ; and no persuasion, no sophistry will ever lead the mass of mankind consistently and completely to deny an innate difference between good and evil. On such a subject the common people are wiser than the Vedas, for they follow nature, and they obey those convictions which the wise God implanted within their hearts. They feel too that such a distinction between virtue and vice must be recognised fully and perfectly by God himself ; for He is the standard of right and the punisher of evil. Add to this that all men feel a sense of responsibility, and that the fear of punishment in the future ever exercises a most beneficial influence in restraining from evil those who feel it.

2. Men not only judge their own character and the quality of their own acts by such rules, they *apply the same to the conduct of others*, and that generally with greater justice than to their own. Thus it is that certain courses of conduct are universally approved and others as generally condemned. The benevolent, the charitable, the self-denying, the just, the forbearing, are always commended. The obedient son, the affectionate daughter, the friend faithful in adversity, are honoured and esteemed. But the thief, the liar, the seducer, the murderer are always reprobated, and, by the virtuous, their society is shunned, however powerless men may be to punish them. Thus it is that love, justice, self-denial ever give happiness to those who practise them : while oppression, hatred, selfishness yield no enduring satisfaction and leave a sting behind. How can this be, with such regularity, among all men, in all ages and all countries, unless the constitution of man had moral notions implanted within it, to be the guides of human conduct.

3. Again, what is *law*, both criminal and civil, but a public protest against this confounding of right and wrong. Individual errors there may be ; legal systems may not be perfect, but they are founded on certain great points, con-

fessed by common consent to be good or evil in their very nature. Stealing, murder, disobedience to parents, violence, sacrilege are universally regarded as evils, though the extent to which they are reprobated and punished may vary with the enlightenment or ignorance of different communities. Let the *Vedas* then, the *Sútras*, the *Gítá* and other great authorities assert their pantheism, with its annihilation of morality and of human sympathy, we can appeal to the universal convictions of men, that they are not stones nor machines, but that they are free to act, are able to enjoy, can sympathise with misfortune, and that their conscience accuses or excuses them in reference to good and evil. In this too the Bráhmists join us ; for they have both repudiated Pantheism and given in their adherence to a moral system. But having done so, to be consistent, they must throw off their belief in the *Vedas* as a revelation from God, seeing that those shás-tras contradict one of the most striking and universal facts which the creator has established in his works. The man or book, which flatly denies in words, what the God of all says in his works, *cannot be His messenger*.

SECTION 7.—DEFENCE OF IDOLATRY.

The encouragement given to idolatry by the *Bhagabat Gítá* is most decided. The passages quoted in the early part of this Essay declare it to be in truth the worship of the supreme, fully approved by Him ; and that men who believe it folly, should, for the encouragement of the common people and for the sake of a good example, continue to practise it. It will be thought strange that the modern Bráhmas speak in somewhat similar terms of this great evil. They have opposed Puránic Hinduism from the days of Rámmohan Roy ; have circulated a tract against it ; and mutually covenanted not to practise it themselves ; yet they are found *defending it, to a certain extent, as beneficial to the vulgar*. The poor, who have been living on poison for centuries and

thereby lost their moral health, have been informed of their folly; and are now encouraged to feed on it still until they are wise enough and strong enough to seek for better food. That this is no exaggeration, a few extracts from the writings of the Bráhmists will show. "These as well as several other texts of the same nature are not real commands, but only direct those who are unfortunately incapable of adoring the invisible supreme Being, to apply their minds to any visible thing rather than allow them to remain idle." (Rámmohan Roy.) "We now come to that part of the doctrine of the Vedas, which inculcates that those who cannot turn their minds to God in spirit should worship Him through the medium of matter. There are men of that grovelling class whose minds are incapable of making a proper degree of exertion; and these are required not to lose themselves in the mazes of irreligion, the bane of society, but rather to fix their attention on some of the grandest objects of the world, and consider them to be so many manifestations of the supremacy of the only true God, who pervades all creation; and to worship them as so animated by his influence, that thus their minds may be gradually trained by spiritual tuition to the true mental adoration of the supreme Being.. Such injunctions were mercifully made for the benefit of the ignorant and untrained." "The rites and ceremonies inculcated in the Vedas are intended to be preparatory to the spiritual worship of God, and are expressly declared to be useful to men, who cannot raise their minds from nature up to nature's God." (*Vedántic doctrines vindicated*; pp. 43 and 18.) It is allowed in these extracts that the Vedas permit to the vulgar not only the performance of certain specific ceremonies, but the actual 'worship' of some of the grandest objects in nature, as being 'animated by the influence' of the supreme; that this worship will be 'beneficial' to the illiterate, and may prepare them for higher knowledge and faith. This is confessedly taught in the Vedas, as well as by the Gitá; and the Bráhmas, holding the same opi-

nion, pride themselves on their great liberality and congratulate themselves on not being so intolerant as the Christians are declared to be. The following statement of their views is so important that we cannot abridge it. "We believe that *every kind of worshipper will have his own species of reward*, from the savage Polynesian who addresses his ejaculations to a rude misshapen block of stone, to the Vedántist who adores God in spirit and in truth.. We do neither believe that our benighted countrymen who worship idols, would be plunged into eternal hell fire, nor do we believe that the Bráhma ought not to wean them as gently and leniently as he can from their gross and debasing polytheistic notions of the divinity.. We should beg you to know that such nominal polytheism (as the Vedas contain) is taken by them in a light totally different from that in which it is so done by the scriptures of the Jews, the Christians and the Mahommedans. The writers of their scriptures believed God to be a jealous God, and all polytheism and idolatry to be produced through the influence of satanic agency.. By them, therefore, polytheistic worship, even in its mildest and most tolerable forms, had been considered as a heinous and damnable sin; while by our scripturalists, it, if followed according to their design, had been considered as harmless and innocuous; as nothing but the adoration of the all-excellent and all-benevolent, as resplendent and conspicuous in particular objects of creation; as nothing but a ladder to rise by degrees to the worship of the Light of lights through contemplation and truth." (*Tattwa. Patriká*, i. 352.) According to this passage, (1) polytheistic idolatry is *not to be punished*: (2) it is to *meet with reward*: (3) the reward will be *proportioned* to the spirit of the idolater: (4) in its mildest forms, it is *really* 'adoration of the all-excellent:' (5) as such, IT IS HARMLESS AND INNOCUOUS: (6) the *means* for overthrowing its grossest forms must be *lenient and gentle*. Such are the opinions of the modern Bráhmas; let us proceed to test their value.

1. The worship of created objects is allowed to the illite-

rate, because *it is difficult* for them to adore the invisible supreme. Allowing, for the sake of argument that spiritual worship is difficult, *is idolatry less difficult* if the same object is to be accomplished? Illiterate men are encouraged to adore the grandest objects of creation, the sun, moon, earth, fire, lightning, rain and the like, and to present gifts to them, with thanks and prayers. But is it *less difficult* for common sense, of which even the poor have a large share, to conceive that material things, possessing only material properties, inanimate and gross, are *fit representatives* of the self-existent and eternal Spirit? Is it easier for common sense to believe that the sun or moon can hear prayer, than to trust that an unseen Being, present every where and omniscient, is listening to us: that a huge mass of matter, without intelligence, and inferior to man himself, can grant all we require, than to lift our thoughts to Him who made them? Is it less easy for common sense to invest these material objects with the attributes of the one spirit than to meditate directly on that spirit himself? The human mind cannot believe such contradictions; it cannot mingle such perfect opposites. It must separate them, and *either* it will give up the notion of Godhead altogether; or it will let go the material and confine itself to the Godhead alone. Which of these courses idolaters have invariably followed, the history of idolatry will show.

2. That history shows that idolatry even in its mildest forms has ever contradicted the theory advocated. *It never has raised men, it has ever led to their abasement.* According to the *Patriká*, the earliest worship among Hindus, as described in the Vedas, was the worship of the personified elements. The Bible and Ancient History shew that the same practice was almost universal. If the Bráhmist theory is correct, nothing could have prospered better: and in a generation or two all nations ought to have laid aside their ignorance and to have worshipped the supreme by contemplation and truth. But what is the fact? That first departure from purely spiritual worship, was the first step in a course

that led, *not upward but downward*. That step was followed by many others, until in modern days, the spiritual worshippers are almost extinct and the debased idolaters are numbered by millions. The Hindus have never risen one atom since they forsook the true God; but have sunk lower and lower, till they can sink no more. They have gone from the worship of one God to that of six or seven others: thence to the worship of others, till their gods reached 330 millions in number. Not content with these they proceeded to invent new ones, as *Dakshinroy* and *Oladebi*. They have fallen not only in the *objects* of worship, but also in the *mode* of it. From offering those celebrated sacrifices, the Purushamedha, the Aswamedha, the Nachiketic fire, and the like, they have come down to worship the linga of Siva, and present flowers, fruits and rice to painted idols. Men now cut their flesh or pierce their tongues, arms and sides in honour of their gods. They cover their idols to keep them warm, put them to bed, bathe them, clothe them, paint them, fan them, sound music in their ears or sing pleasant songs; or swing them in the air, or ride them on triumphal cars. They have come down from those celebrated ceremonies to the Tantra orgies celebrated at dead of night, where men meet together, with spirits to drink, and naked harlots to sport with, and call their brutish abominations the worship of God. They have fallen too in the *dignity* and *form* of their gods. From the sun and moon, the work of God's creation, they have come down to adore the work of their own hands. Now they give homage not to those splendid orbs, but to Durga and her lion; Kali and her long red tongue: Gonesh with the elephant's head; Krishna with his flute; Gopál with outstretched hand, begging sweetmeats from his mother; the obscene linga; the pot-bellied Shiva; and the peak-nosed, legless Jagannáth. In whatever way we look at the idolatry of the Hindus; whether at the objects of their worship, the mode of its celebration, or the forms of their idols, throughout its history we see its followers sinking lower and lower, till they can sink no more.

3. There is nothing strange in such a course ; it is according to the *natural tendency* of things. Just as a wife who has left her husband knows not where to stop in the practice of vice ; as the drunkard, who has once yielded to the habit of intemperance knows not how to return, but becomes more and more debased till his career ends in a premature death ; so when men have once forsaken the true worship of the true God which was original and commanded, however high they may stand at first, they are certain to go lower. Having once given up the sole object of their love what object may they not choose to serve ? If a man with an immaterial, immortal soul, once surrenders that soul to the worship and adoration of material things inferior to himself, when shall he of his own accord return from the debasement in which he has voluntarily placed himself, and in which he finds his pleasure ? Idolatry is but a question of *degree*. Whether men worship grander or more contemptible objects, their worship is still idolatry ; it is still the voluntary debasement of the immaterial mind below material things. The Bráhmas argue that through such worship their views will be elevated. The history of idolatry proves the contrary ; and the nature of it will effectually hinder such a result. The practice of theft furnishes no road to the love of honesty. The practice of adultery does not lead to purity of thought. Continuance in rebellion does not increase a reverence for national law. Low habits do not elevate men. Ignorance does not civilize them. Neither then can the worship of material things tend to promote spiritual views of the character of God. When it shall do so, we shall find the sun producing darkness : and the vicious rewarded for promoting virtue. *The law of nature forbids it*. Every effect must proceed from an adequate cause. As is the cause so will be the effect. Men always assimilate to the gods they worship. Those gods become their model ; and the character and likings of the deity are the rule of conduct to his worshippers. On this principle the followers of the *Sri Bhágabat Purán*, wander about the

country in licentious bands, imitating the deeds of their idol Krishna, and defend themselves by a reference to his example. What Hindu will learn purity from the songs of the Rás and Dól Játtrás; the love of peace from the quarrels of the gods; or the love of purity from the legends about Brahmá, Vishnu and Mahadeb?

4. The fact that idolatry of any kind *will never make men rise* in spirituality is *especially true of that class*, in relation to whom the practice has been defended. In the wise it is reckoned folly, because they can see its true character. How then shall it benefit the ignorant who have not that power? Nature teaches us that a *good thing* will always produce good results: and bad fruits *must* spring from bad sources. Whence sprang the present debased condition of the Hindus? It has sprung from the religion held by their forefathers and which has slowly but surely sunk and fallen till it has reached the position in which we now see it. If the fruit be so bad, can the tree be so good?

That the defence of idolatry by the Bráhmists will tend to perpetuate these evils, is evident from the following considerations. An ignorant Hindu declares the idol Jagannáth to be God. The wise Bráhmist tells him: 'No: it is not so: but it will do you good to worship it, and most assuredly you will be rewarded in the next world.' What higher assurance does the idolater want. He will not perplex himself with hard questions, as to how a thing can do him good, get him future reward and yet be wrong. But he will feel that he has been confirmed in his practice by a man wiser than himself, *and be still more an idolater than he was before*. Does not the utter powerlessness of the Tattwabodhini Sabhá against the present Puránic idolatry illustrate this argument and confirm its soundness? Their hands have been tied by themselves in relation to the subject, and hence their utter want of influence.

5. If it be said; The Hindus do not really worship these idols or objects in nature, but worship the supreme God by

their means ; we reply : This does not improve the state of the question against them. For, (1) it is as great an exertion of faith, if not a greater one, to worship the Supreme God indirectly as directly. (2) It is not less foolish than the direct worship : for how can material *things* possessing material attributes, be in any way adequate representations of Him who is a spirit ? (3) If they are not real gods but only imaginary, then we may apply to them the statement of the *Mahānīrvān* : " If making a god in imagination constitutes him such in reality : then the man who dreams that he is a king becomes a king in fact." (4) Those who are well acquainted with the Hindus plainly declare that they do not look on their idols as mediators, but as being themselves gods. Rájá Rámmohan Roy distinctly and fully states this in his preface to the *Isopanishad*.

6. We *deny* in toto the *truth of the assumption* on which the defence of idolatry is based. *The poor and illiterate, when properly taught, can understand the character and attributes of the unseen God.* They cannot understand his *form* ; for he has none : but they can understand the attributes which adorn his character, their relation to him as his creatures, the duties arising therefrom, and the motives by which those duties are enforced. Similar attributes on a smaller scale they see in themselves and others. Similar relations, similar duties, and similar motives to enforce them, exist in their own circumstances. They can love a benefactor whom they have never even seen ; obey a master who seldom appears among them ; remember their parents when far distant ; and submit to the authority of a Queen though she never set foot upon their soil. Their nature and constitution therefore are fully prepared to render true worship to the true God, and that they can render it, is proved from a thousand facts. We need not refer to the poor Christians of Great Britain amongst whom idolatry is unknown, and whose faith, devotion, obedience and purity of conduct, prove how thoroughly the uneducated are elevated by the knowledge of

a true religion. But we may refer to the fact, that during the last few years, negroes in Western Africa have learnt from the Bible to give up their Fetish and honour an unseen Saviour; Hottentots, Fingoes and Bushmen at the Cape of Good Hope have done the same: and among the Polynesians, of whom the Bráhmists speak, during the last twenty years 60,000 of them in the Navigators' Islands, have given up their brutish idolatry to worship Him who is a Spirit, in spirit and in truth.

7. Lastly. Another consideration, that lies at the root of the question, will show how erroneous this defence of idolatry is, and how utterly unworthy its advocates are to be the guides of their countrymen into religious truth. **WHAT IS IDOLATRY?** It is the rendering to some chosen object, the worship, trust and love of the heart which are due to the one true God alone. Because He created, preserves, supports and guards men, He has unlimited right of possession over them. They are his, both body and soul. Intellect, heart and will are all exclusively His, even on this ground alone. But He has other claims to their service. He has given to men all their sources of happiness; the materials of enjoyment; the faculty of enjoyment; the varieties of enjoyment in the senses, the understanding, the feelings, the will: derived from them singly, derived from them in combination. It is He who has bestowed them all. Gratitude therefore is superadded to right and makes the grounds of obedience stronger. If then we are so thoroughly His, all our love, all our worship are due to him, and to give them to another is to rob him and thus rebel against his authority. The Queen of Great Britain claims the obedience of all her subjects to the laws of the realm, because they are members of the society which she rules. To disobey these laws, even the least of them, is reckoned a public injury; and to call in question her authority or attempt to set another in her place is counted treason and is punished with death. Just such is idolatry. In its very nature it is the rejection of the authority

of God, and the willing submission of the heart to another object that has no claim to it. Submission to several gods only makes the matter worse. He who takes many pretenders for his kings is not less a rebel than he who takes but one. His act is rebellion still : and in no case can rebellion on a small scale lead to obedience on a large one. It matters not who is the pretender that robs God of his due. It may be of a higher or a lower kind ; it may be an intellectual, a moral, or a physical object : the act of worshipping it in the place of God is an act of open rebellion. It may be Agni or Jagannáth ; Varun or Mahádeb ; Indra or Dakhinroy ; it may be the Sun and Moon ; or Sitola and Ola Debi : this matters nothing. *The act of idolatry is the same*, though exercised towards different objects, and can never be defended. That the Vedas permit it, sanction it and promise rewards to its followers, proves incontestibly that they are not the revealed word of God. That the Bráhmas allow it, and declare it to be ‘ harmless,’ shows how little they understand the teaching of Nature, and how unworthy they are to be religious teachers. That the Bible condemns it wholly, in all degrees, and in relation to all objects, shews how truly its precepts accord with the lessons of nature, and with the duties and responsibilities of men ; and how fully those precepts are calculated to promote their welfare.

SECTION 8.—ON TRANSMIGRATION.

The doctrine of the transmigration of souls has long been exploded from the philosophy of Europe. But it is deeply rooted in the faith of the common people of Bengal, is taught in their Shástras and still occupies a place in that new system of Bráhmism which is intended to regenerate the country. It is necessary therefore to make a few observations upon it.

1. *No direct proof* of the doctrine is contained either in the Vedas or the works of the modern Bráhmas : though the burden of proof lies with those who teach it. However

unable its opponents may be to disprove it, unless its advocates furnish good and sufficient arguments in its favour, it must be disbelieved. Of such direct proof they furnish nothing.

2. The only argument we are acquainted with in its favour is an indirect one, and is thus stated. *Many men are born* into the world as *lepers, blind, lame, poor* and so on : As these sufferings must be the punishment of sin committed before their present birth, it must be supposed that they existed previously. This argument is based upon the assumed principle, that such persons are suffering *punishment*, which must of course be for errors of their own. The question is : Is this the only possible explanation of such a fact ? If a better and sounder explanation can be given ; and if other arguments can be brought against the doctrine, it must fall to the ground for want of any support whatsoever. The fact that some men are born lepers, blind and so on, without any fault of their own, may be explained on other principles ; and in a way which has quite satisfied the minds of the wisest of European philosophers. The close connections subsisting between human beings, various in their nature and very numerous ; derived from blood-relationship, from fellow-citizenship, from living near to one another and so on, tend entirely to destroy all human independence. No man stands alone. He is bound to others in many ways, and they are bound to him. He exerts varied influence upon others, and is influenced by others in return. Sometimes he is a means of distributing good among them, and sometimes he does evil : he can scarcely do a single thing which does not exert *some* influence upon them. If he do good they will be benefited : but if evil, many may suffer solely through his fault. They *suffer*, it is true, but it often happens that in their suffering, there is no personal punishment involved. A boy playing with fire, carelessly sets fire to his father's cottage. A high wind is blowing : the fire spreads from hut to hut ; a whole bazar is burned down ; much property is destroyed ;

many persons are scorched and a few lives lost. For whose fault do the sufferers feel? Not for their own: this is not a punishment for a peculiar crime which each and all have done; but they suffer because they are all connected together and a fire in their neighbourhood injures them all. Again, a man introduces the infection of disease into his house, quite unintentionally. One or two members of his family catch it and die. It gets among his neighbours; it passes through villages, towns, districts, sweeping a wide tract of country and destroying many lives. The same effect, injury inflicted by another, without any reference to personal character, follows in this as in the former case.

Such examples are numerous. It is on this principle of the close connection subsisting between the members of a society, that the family of a murderer, though guiltless of his crime, share in the disgrace brought on by it. In this way the son of a rebel loses both the title and the property which would have fallen to him. The children of a profligate man are idiots or sick or weak; for no fault of their own; but for their father's errors. A whole people may be led astray by the false doctrines of one man: or a whole people may be restored by one man's good instructions. The more closely society is bound together, the more thoroughly will the good or evil acts of its individual members be felt by all. The lesson we learn from this, is a strong argument against doing any kind of evil, whether in the physical, mental or moral world; because of the many who will suffer from it: and a strong encouragement to do good of every kind, from the number of our fellow-men whom it is sure to benefit.

Now all suffering is no doubt the consequence of sin: and as sin pervades all society, suffering and in many cases, punishment will be extensively felt. But many will suffer without fault on their part. In this way it is that some men are born leprous, blind, lame; or become so during life; or lose their name, their health, their property. God wishes by this to *keep in the minds* of the community a *remembrance of their*

sin and hold up a standing warning against it, by the dreadful sight of its effects on an extended scale even in the present world. He wishes also by the same arrangement *to test* and *try* the character, feelings and principles of men in this scene of their probation. For the purposes of such a trial, it is necessary that good men suffer adversity and wicked men enjoy prosperity. A mother's love is tested more by the illness of a child than by its health. The patience and principle of men are tested by unfavourable circumstances which call them into exercise. If we would try gold well, we must put it in the fire.

If this explanation be sound, and if it fairly account for the fact of some men being born lepers and blind, on principles which accord with the usual course and intentions of God's all-wise providence, the necessity for explaining it by reference to former births of men is entirely obviated, and the hypothesis of transmigration (for it is nothing more) falls to the ground; unless it be taught as an inspired doctrine revealed by God himself. Besides the explanation of such a phenomenon by the supposition that such men are punished for the faults of a previous birth, by no means teaches or gives a shadow of proof, that the souls of men *will be* born again *in the future*. It is possible, nay, judging from the sense of accountability in man, it is most probable, that each will receive a final judgment after his present life. That part of the doctrine at least, and by far its most important part, is entirely gratuitous.

3. There is again, an unanswerable argument against transmigration drawn from one fact in our mental constitution, about which its advocates say very little. By transmigration of souls is, of course, meant that the same soul in the course of time takes up its residence in different bodies. Only the *body is changed*, the *mind is the same mind*. This is essential to the hypothesis. The mind therefore being *the same* possesses the same constitution and retains the same faculties and powers in its present as in its former births. It still per-

ceives, remembers, recollects what it learned long ago, imagines, judges, reasons. Let us look especially at its *memory*. So powerful is this faculty that, judging from numerous illustrations of its phenomena, many philosophers consider that it never loses a single atom of the information which it once receives. The greater portion of that intelligence may be out of consciousness and may not be recalled into consciousness for many years; much indeed may be never recalled during life. But it is all there; laid up in the recesses of the mind and entwined into its very constitution. Hence it is that, though the body of a man changes ten times during seventy years, or even oftener, the mind can trace out the man's history from beginning to end, and describe the numerous events which have distinguished that long period of time. Not only so; but how many old men, as their powers begin to decay, lose the remembrance of recent events, while that of the scenes and incidents of their younger days becomes more vivid. In how many cases has it happened that in a severe sickness, the patient has been heard to speak the language of his youth, the words of which had not passed his lips for perhaps more than twenty years. In America, this phenomenon is constantly exhibited to this day among the German emigrants. It is for the same reason that, under circumstances of disease and derangement, uneducated servants have been heard to repeat long passages from the Greek, Latin and Hebrew classics, which had been merely read in their hearing accidentally. The mind received but a slight impression, and yet retained it; retained it perfectly, and retained it for years. The phenomena of memory, like those of other faculties, are interwoven with the soul's constitution and form part and parcel (so to speak) of the mind itself. Hence it is that men can voluntarily recal with perfect exactness the trivial events of their early days; while many such continually present themselves to consciousness unbidden and unexpected. But who ever heard of a man, who could recal the history of his former birth, and describe the

details of time, place and condition in which he lived. Yet if the theory be true, the mind ought to retain such knowledge : it cannot do otherwise, and every man in the world ought to experience it. A traveller, who journeys through the earth from city to city, carries with him the remembrance of his native land whence he started, of the relatives he left, the place where he lived, the language he spoke ; he recollects too the condition and appearance of each city he has entered, the appearance of its buildings, the occupations of its people, and the incidents that happened to himself. Now the body we are told is 'the city of Brahma : ' and the soul as it enters new 'cities' in the course of ages ought from its very constitution to carry with it a complete remembrance of all its past history ; events of which may occasionally appear in consciousness of their own accord (especially in dreams) or may be recalled at pleasure. But *not one* such phenomenon has ever been experienced by a single man. No soul remembers aught that has happened to it previous to its present life. The proof then is almost perfect that it never lived before.

4. To this it may be answered, that *something takes place* at every new birth, such as drinking the waters of Lethe, *by which that remembrance* of its previous history is *destroyed*. Allowing the possibility of such a destruction, this theory implies that a change, a compulsory change, takes place in the mind, by which it is made *no longer the same* as it was. As a consequence the man on whom it is wrought is no longer the same man. He is cut off from all the events that happened to him in former days. The pleasures and pains he enjoyed, the good and evil which he did, are no longer *his* : as far as he is concerned, they are annihilated. This supposition at once sets aside (1) an essential element in the definition of transmigration, viz. that the soul remained the same soul ; for the substance of the soul is the same, but it is entirely emptied of all it ever had and is to all intents and purposes *a new soul*. (2) This supposition *destroys the very end* for which the transmigration exists, namely, that of

purifying the soul by lessons of warning, drawn from its past history. All the crimes of former lives have been forgotten ; a man knows not what he did and why he is punished. If he be punished, he can certainly say that, as he has now been made an altered being, it was not *he* who did the things, the punishment of which he bears. The result of the whole is that *we are led to this conclusion*, to avert which the doctrine of transmigration was laid down ; that *one man is really punished* (not merely made to suffer accidentally, but is positively PUNISHED) for THE FAULTS OF ANOTHER. Its advocates wish to escape from an imaginary injustice and run into a real one.

5. That this doctrine cannot be true we see again from the *effects* it has produced on the Hindu community. They feel that they are under the burden of a blind fate, which compels them to suffer for some crime or other of which they are unconscious. That punishment must be borne ; they have no help for it ; there is no way of escape so long as they live. Hence they are fatalists both in belief and practice.

Again ; *Is this world a place*, where the soul is likely to get *purification* in the way which transmigration teaches ? With its endless temptations, its wicked example, its countless sins both of the heart and life, is it a school where the soul will learn lessons of wisdom, purity and obedience ? If it be, the community subject to its discipline ought ever to be rising in the scale of improvement. But the Hindus have only been sinking for ages.

Considering then that the doctrine of transmigration has *no positive evidence in its favour* : that it is merely an *hypothesis* intended to explain a fact which its advocates misunderstand and which may be explained far better in another way ; that it contradicts in its essential conditions the nature of the human mind and especially the power and effects of memory ; that it involves the injustice of punishing one man for faults which he has not committed and rewarding another for merits to which he has no claim ; and teaches that this world is a

place suitable for the purification of a soul that is enslaved by the doctrines of fatalism :—considering these things, we have no hesitation in believing the doctrine to be an error of human invention ; and in declaring it as our opinion, that the shástras which teach it are the opposite of inspired and the religion of which it forms an important part is both a folly and an injury to society.

SECTION 9.—ON CASTE.

Another error, upheld by the three Vedántic systems in common, which from its injurious effects is alone sufficient to show that they are not from God and cannot promote man's prosperity, is the theory and practice of CASTE. The origin of the institution we have described from one of the Upanishads, and have shewn both from them and the Vedánt, that the very knowledge of religious duty is mixed up with its regulations. On the subject of Caste the modern Bráhmans have spoken little in words, but their opinion is not the less known. For *first* : they have *not condemned* the system, which, if they are wise men desirous of their country's welfare, they ought to have done. *Secondly* : they *yield authority* in religion to the *Upanishads*, which declare it to be a divine institution. *Thirdly* : they maintain its rules both among themselves and in regard to others : and *fourthly* : they have exhibited the *most determined enmity* to those who are endeavouring to weaken and destroy it. Thus they have fairly pledged themselves in its defence and must bear the consequences.

The system of Caste in its very nature enforces the superiority of one class in Hindustan and the debasement of another. The superiority of the Bráhmans is maintained by making their persons sacred ; by demanding the profoundest reverence for their order ; by conferring on it especial privileges and powers ; by making partial laws in its favour ; by not enforcing the penalties of crimes ; and by making injuries

against them severely punishable. The inferiority of the degraded class has been established by an opposite course: by making their persons impure; by confining them to servile employments; by enacting severe laws against their delinquencies, and strictly enforcing them; by denying to them the blessings of knowledge; and by rendering it impossible that they can ever enter the superior order. This difference between the two orders has been established under the express sanction of the Vedas, and is declared to have originated in the decrees and actions of the very Creator himself.

1. The first evil we notice in the Caste system is its *gross injustice*. We do not see in it merely the necessary differences in the ranks of human society, where some are rich, some poor; where some are rulers, others are subjects; some are learned and others ignorant. We do not see in it one class benefited for a time by the ordinance of God's providence with a view of communicating those benefits on a large scale to others. But we see a permanent, an eternal distinction established by it between two classes. The one is made a tyrannical master, without reference to superior moral fitness; the other is made an abject slave; and means are cunningly provided for keeping him so. However intelligent, active, or benevolent a Sudra may be, according to law, he *can never rise* in this life to become a Bráhmín. Where is the justice of this?

2. It tends to destroy *all sympathy* between the different individuals and classes of a community. Separated as they are from one another in interests, customs, and the ordinary intercourse of social life; and liable to degradation where caste rules are broken through, how much inhumanity to the sick, and inhospitality to strangers must necessarily result. Thence succeed deadness of heart, unkindness, selfishness and readiness to quarrel. They understand little of human nature, who think that to prohibit classes of men from eating, smoking and intermarrying with one another, is no great hardship. Far otherwise does the result prove. How many

of the roughnesses of life are smoothed down in that expansion of the human heart which takes place in the free intercourse of a social meal. How many a quarrel has it settled or prevented. How many bargains in trade; how many political agreements have been facilitated by its means. How often has the affection of families, the union of neighbours, the increase of friendships been promoted by such free and social intercourse. But of these means of cultivating, sustaining and increasing mutual goodwill to the fullest extent, the Hindus have been unjustly deprived.

3. *Caste fights against the law of nature*, in compelling men to follow occupations according to their birth, not their ability. Whatever theory men may entertain on the subject, few facts are better established among free-minded nations than this; that sons differ greatly from their fathers both in their kind of ability and its degree. It often happens that the son of a wise man possesses a very common amount of intelligence: while the son of an uneducated peasant is found to be gifted with the most splendid abilities. In the same way sons do not generally follow their fathers' employment, but choose one for themselves. By so doing every man is able to take up that pursuit for which he is naturally fitted, and can carry it on with interest and pleasure.* The rules of caste have compelled the Hindus to act on an opposite plan. They have compelled every son, whether he liked it or no, to follow his father's trade: and as it was most natural that he should *not* like it, his efforts to carry it on must have wanted the stimulus and energy which spring only from the willing mind. This case has happened in thousands of instances during successive ages. The consequence has been, labour has been forced not voluntary. Thence it has been unproductive. The mode of carrying on each trade has become stereotyped and fixed. No energy, no enterprise has been exerted to improve it: especially when the trader knew

* Many illustrations of this plan and of the benefits which result from it are given by Mr. Clift in his 'Political Economy.'

that his Bráhmín masters would seize the larger share of his increased profits. All labourers have been degraded ; and all arts depressed. No prizes, no honours have encouraged the manufacturer and artist : while knowledge has been denied to them and human leeches have sucked their blood. Independence, activity of thought, ingenuity, have all been lost, and the Hindus have made no progress for full 2000 years. The way to make men strong and healthy is to let them grow naturally and to foster their natural powers. The North American Indians flatten their children's heads on a board and spoil their beauty. The Chinese tie up the feet of their women and make them cripples. But caste has crippled the Hindu *mind* ; and by swaddling bands and cruel enactments has enslaved and degraded it, till its people are what they are. Such is not the teaching of the laws which the God of Creation has written upon his works.

The Bráhmas in their *Patriká* have often referred to the former days of India's greatness ; and feel some small degree of enthusiasm in contemplating the deeds of the Rájás of ancient times. But most inconsistently they cherish the very system, which cut that greatness short and most effectually prevented the development of the energies it had begun to exert. That caste which destroyed union among the people of ancient India, destroyed their intelligence, destroyed the productiveness of their labour, destroyed their wealth, destroyed their motives to exertion, and made them slaves to a selfish priesthood, that caste they still maintain. They mourn the destruction, but cherish the destroyer !

4. *Caste has promoted Idolatry.* The knowledge of the Vedas and Vedángas being strictly confined to the Bráhmans, no knowledge worth the name was left for the Sudras and people of mixed caste. Science, such as it was, together with the higher views of religion was wholly denied to them. Their intellect was undeveloped, their feelings blunted, their conscience not enlightened and its appeals not enforced. No religious instruction was given to them ; they were not allow-

ed to seek true 'wisdom.' Nothing was left to them but *idolatry*; they were *obliged* to be idolaters, and as by the increase in the number of idols, or in the splendour of their worship, the Bráhmín was profited and the Sudra pleased: as the two antagonist orders found this the only common ground where they could both meet, idolatry advanced with rapid strides. The number of gods increased. From that store-house of legendary lore, the Mahábhárat, old stories were taken out, dressed up, and enlarged. The Purans were formed. The Tantras followed. Thus caste pushed on idolatry: thus one curse of the land promoted another; and that other bound the chains of the former more firmly.

The Bráhmists refer us, for the basis of their system, to the works of nature. To the works of God therefore we have turned; but where do they teach CASTE? Look at all the nations of the earth. Is there one, except the priest-ridden people of Hindustan, that says, they do teach it, and that to understand the system rightly, we must go back to the creation of all things. If the Bráhmas maintain the caste system either in language or in act, (and we have shown that they do) then we ask the reader candidly to judge whether such men are really proper interpreters of the truths which nature teaches. Afraid to see their own doctrine faithfully carried out, they have compromised their attachment to it, by joining in the defence of a system, which has injured their country in its very vitals and continues to curse it still. Herein they contradict the lessons of that 'nature,' whose teaching they profess faithfully to follow!

SECTION 10.—THE RELIGION OF NATURE.

Though the Bráhmas claim the Vedas as a revelation of divine truth, they look primarily upon the works of NATURE as their religious teacher. From nature they learned first, and because the Vedas (as they assert) *agree with* nature, therefore they regard them as inspired. In the letter given

above they thus speak : "The volume of Nature is open to all and that volume contains a revelation, clearly teaching in strong and legible characters the great truths of religion and morality, and giving as much knowledge of our state after death as is necessary for the attainment of future blessedness." "The knowledge derived from the source of inspiration deals with eternal truths which require no other proof than what the whole creation and the mind of man, unperverted by fallacious reasonings, afford in abundance." (*Ved. doc. Vind.* p. 35.) Based on this principle, Bráhmism presents itself as one of the forms of NATURAL RELIGION, or, as it is generally termed, DEISM ; a form which partakes of the characteristic qualities of the genus, but has peculiarities which mark it as a distinct species. These peculiarities we have already discussed ; and shall now briefly examine the more *general features* of the system ; especially as the greater number of educated young natives in this part of India take up with one or other variety of Natural Religion.

The pretensions of DEISM are very high. The works of nature certainly teach much, when rightly studied : a fact which is willingly allowed by Christians, among whom have arisen the finest writers on Natural Theology. But Deists assert that it teaches every thing. "In it," says a recent Calcutta writer, "the Creator reveals a religion which addresses itself to the world, satisfies the spiritual longings of the soul and affords a panacea for all its maladies." "Does not the Deist refer to a code wherein every law, physical, organic, intellectual, moral and religious, is inscribed in plainest and most intelligible characters by the finger of God ? Does he not cite his authority from that stately volume where every leaf is a spacious plain, every line a flowing brook, every period a lofty mountain ?" English Deists have said the same a hundred times : but they have never yet explained two or three mighty facts which Christians have urged against such magniloquent assertions. That the claim is unfounded, and their system insufficient, we shall endeavour to show from the fol-

lowing considerations : viz. i. : That *Natural Religion is uncertain in what it does teach* ; ii. : That it is *defective* ; considering what it *does not teach* ; and iii. : That its *effects* prove it to be *powerless* against human evil.

i. *Natural Religion* is a *very uncertain system* to follow. Its doctrines are not clearly settled yet, though the works of nature have been before the eye of man for nearly six thousand years. The followers of nature have examined and studied them repeatedly ; but they all differ in the results ; just as a band of Astronomers with squinting eyes would differ in mapping down the stations and sizes of the stars. Deists allow that the old writers, like Socrates and Plato, felt uncertain about these lessons of nature, and were as ignorant of Natural Religion as they were of sound physical science. But they affirm that modern discoveries have attained a knowledge far beyond theirs, and have settled matters about which they were in doubt. "Truths unknown to the intellectual giants of antiquity (says a recent Calcutta writer) are familiar to the ordinary scholars of our day ; problems which Plato and Cicero failed to solve have been solved by their successors in science and learning. The progress of the knowledge of God's works and dissemination of the principles of sound morality, which did not humanize the people of by-gone ages, have in our days not only mitigated the horrors of war and the atrocities of crime but refined our manners and softened our hearts." The whole force of the Deistic question turns on this. *Is Deism more settled in its doctrines and has it produced more holy effects, in modern than in ancient times ?* Facts prove that it is not, and that its results are the same now as they ever were.

The most important questions in religion and morality to which man's attention can be turned, and on which his happiness chiefly rests are such as the following. Is there a God ? If there is, what are the distinguishing attributes of his character ? Has he moral as well as intellectual attributes ? Does He govern the world by his superintending providence ? Ought

man to worship him? Has he given, or is he likely to give to man any special intimations of his will? Has he defined the rules of moral conduct? Will man still live after death, and if so under what conditions? Let us hear what the teaching of nature is, upon these subjects, from the men who profess to have received it from her. We shall perceive immediately that on *no one point* are they agreed. Some have provided answers to these questions which have been forthwith repudiated by others: what some affirm, others deny. What some consider essential truths, are regarded by others as positive errors. Their disagreements are numerous, as those who have studied the great writers unanimously testify. Sometimes they exalt reason; at others, despise it. Sometimes they represent mankind as intelligent and able to understand all religion, at others they reckon them debased and ignorant. In their judgment of Christianity they also differ. Sometimes Christ is praised, at others vilified: sometimes his apostles are commended for their sincerity; at others slandered as designing hypocrites. Sometimes Christianity is declared to be the best religion: at others the principles advocated tend to the utter destruction of all religion and all morality. We shall give examples of these differences on some specific subjects.

a. As to the *being of God*. It is a notorious fact that many Deists have been Atheists, who denied the existence of God altogether. The majority of Deists however allow that there is a God. But which are we to believe? Many tell us that from the marks of design every where apparent in the universe, we are compelled to infer an Intelligent Being as the Cause: and therefore nature teaches us that it had a creator. On this subject what says Mr. Hume: "While we argue from the course of nature and infer a particular intelligent cause,.. we embrace a principle which is both uncertain and useless." The Bráhmās in Bengal believe in a God, the one Supreme Brahm. But many of their countrymen follow Mr. Hume. "Nature is the final cause: the superintending

cause is nothing separate from the body of universal nature." "Nature is the common power by which every thing is produced. All the effects may be traced to one final cause, and nature is one, not many.. She is self-existing, and she is the creator of all and *she has even created herself.*" "A phantom superior to nature has been always created by our race to account for every occurrence, with the natural cause of which they were unacquainted." "Which of the two is most probable, that nature is God; or that God is superior to nature? The *former* has on its side the *general experience of mankind..* the *latter* has only the *conviction of some isolated theologians.*"* Here the two parties of native Deists or followers of nature directly oppose one another.

b. *The Attributes of God.* The "Vindication of Deism," recently published in Calcutta, affirms that the works of creation, clearly proclaim the unity of the Deity; his manifold power, inscrutable wisdom, goodness and mercy. The human mind is declared to be a proof of his holiness and justice; of his approbation of virtue and disapprobation of vice. Such however was not the conviction of Mr. Hume. According to him, we ought not to ascribe to God any attribute which is not fully displayed in his works: but no attributes are thus displayed: the utmost we see being "some faint traces or outlines" of them: hence it is only "flattery or presumption" in us to ascribe any attribute or perfection to God at all. Lord Bolingbroke "will not allow that there is any such thing as justice and goodness in God according to our ideas, or any thing answering to what we call justice and goodness." These two attributes he repeatedly denies to God in his voluminous works. He also denies the doctrine of a particular providence and finds fault with the notion which, he says, obtained among the heathens, "that God was constantly attentive to the affairs of men." Men are not punished individually according to merit, but only in societies. Mr.

* "*General reflections on Christianity:*" by Babu Káli Kúmar Dás: 1845. pp. 182; 128—129; 132.

Chubb agrees with Lord Bolingbroke. "He looked upon God as having nothing now to do with the good or evil that is done among mankind."

c. *The worship of God.* Lord Herbert in his celebrated creed lays down as the second and third principles, that "God is chiefly to be worshipped, and that piety and virtue are the principal part of his worship." Lord Bolingbroke teaches the same. Mr. Chubb on the other hand has endeavoured to show that "prayer to God is no part of natural religion," and Mr. Blount held the same opinion. The Bráhmists advocate such worship and regularly practise it. But others of the Calcutta Deists dissent from such a proceeding and disapprove of it, particularly for its publicity. "What is the meaning of worship? We worship God when we imitate him, obey his commands, observe Him as he appears in his works, and perform the duties He has prescribed for us. Our religious duties do not consist in building churches, in giving vain and gorgeous epithets to God or in seeking his favour in such words as these; O! God save me from sin." (*Kali K. Dás*, pp. 152-4.)

d. *Duties of Morality.* That *repentance* which so many extol as the true atonement for sin, Spinoza represented as "a mean, an unreasonable and wretched thing." Lord Herbert held that the indulgence of lust and anger is no more to be blamed than the thirst occasioned by dropsy: and that we ought to pass a mild censure upon those who are carried to sin by a corporeal and almost necessary propensity to vice. Hobbes asserted that the civil law is the only foundation of right and wrong; that where there is no civil law, every man's judgment furnishes the standard; that the sovereign of a nation is not bound by any obligation of truth and justice; and that any man may lawfully take what he can. Lord Bolingbroke taught that ambition, sensuality and avarice may be lawfully gratified, if they can be safely gratified; that vanity is the only foundation of modesty; that the chief end of man is to gratify his fleshly appetites; *that polygamy is a*

part of the religion of nature : and that *adultery* is no *violation* of its laws. Mr. Hume maintained that self-denial and humility are not virtues but are *useless and mischievous* ; that pride, vanity, intelligence, an eloquent tongue and strength of body are virtues : that *adultery must* be practised, if men would enjoy all the advantages of life ; that it is not wrong in itself and, if much practised, would be in time not reprobated. Voltaire held the same views and acted on them. With respect to the *grounds and obligations* of morality, these writers greatly disagree. Lord Bolingbroke maintains that, that which makes a thing right is, not its being the will or law of God, but its being conducive to human happiness. Even the penalties of violating any law of nature do not fall on individuals but on the community. He maintains that *self-love* is the spring of all human actions, and that man is to govern himself by what he thinks most conducive to his interest or his pleasure in his present circumstances. Mr. Hobbes's principle is the same. How is it possible that men who set out with a wrong aim can invent a right system ? We have already shewn that on the general qualities of virtue and vice the consciences of men have agreed in all ages, and that to such sentiments as these they are thoroughly opposed.

The young Deists of Calcutta have not been able to go so far as their predecessors in Europe. Even the writer who goes nearest to them in denying the existence of God, is silent on *what is* virtue and what is not. The Bráhmists speak out most plainly, and in the moral code described in the last chapter give in their adherence to very different principles from those of Mr. Hume, Hobbes and Lord Bolingbroke. But their little work contains some very curious notions, which show how exceedingly defective are those morals which are not based upon the authoritative word of God. Respecting *evidence* it states ; "The gods esteem above all men the witness who doubts not that he has spoken the truth." The man whose memory fails, or who unwittingly makes a mistake, comes under this approval ; and it will apply

most admirably to all the martyrs of Christianity. A *good man*, it is declared, must be 'intelligent' and educated : so that the poor are excluded from the class. Respecting *love to God* it is said, "If a man worships the supreme as one beloved, his beloved ones shall never die : " a sentiment which is utterly untrue in fact ; since many excellent people lose their parents, children, brothers and sisters, by death. Respecting *marriage* it is held, that the *chief duty* of a husband and wife is not to commit adultery. The obligation to mutual love, trust and aid, and the duty of caring for children seem to be entirely forgotten. "She is a real wife who has children." "The house without children is like a smasán for burning the dead." So that barrenness is not merely a misfortune but a crime : and the wife, to whom the Creator denies the gift of offspring, must be reckoned no wife at all. "The younger brother's wife must esteem her husband's elder brother as a father : " a notion purely Hindu ; the *authority* of the elder brother over the younger, which is the law in Hindustan, not being recognised as such in other parts of the world. "A father and mother must be reckoned as a present deity." This is downright idolatry. The rule is Hindu, and from it is derived the custom of a man calling his father his *thákur* or idol. *The motives to virtue* are lamentably erroneous. "All actions unblamed by others you may do ; those blamed you must not perform." So that the popularity of an act is to decide whether it is to be done, not its intrinsic merits. Follow numbers not principle ! "Whatever virtue we practise you may do, but don't practise any thing besides." (xvi. 9, 10.) No man must dare to be holier than his teacher. "Apply yourself to that which you consider to advance your own good." (B. ix. 1.) Follow self-interest, not virtue. "Whatever course will give satisfaction to yourself, follow it out with the greatest zeal : and leave every thing opposed to it." (B. xiii. 4.) "Religion requires nothing that is uncongenial to our mind : the Vedas require us to do nothing that is opposed to our nature." (*Ved. doc.*

Vin. p. 34.) Following such downy precepts, no wonder the Bráhmists refuse to encounter the difficulty of giving up their caste, as nature commands them !

e. Of a future state. There is no subject more important to men in all its bearings, than that of their state after death. No fact in nature, no doctrine of religion, has greater influence on their fears and greater power in restraining their will, than the conviction that the soul will live after the body dies. No fact will ever overturn society, break down all the barriers of lawlessness, and ruin the moral world, so speedily as the certainty that men die just like the beasts of the field. To know which of these cases is true is then among all facts the *one most vital fact*, which the welfare both of individuals and of society requires to be positively known. We turn therefore to this sure and infallible teacher, nature ; to her, whose ‘every leaf is a spacious plain,’ and whose doctrines are written thereon ‘with an indelible pen.’ Alas ! we turn in vain. We are met at the very outset of our enquiries with the appalling fact, that the Deists, the disciples of nature, acknowledge the matter to be so *doubtful*, as to have divided themselves into two bodies, the ‘mortal’ and ‘immortal’ Deists ! The latter believe in the future existence of men : the former do not. This division is entirely a modern one. We will not ask what Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, believed to be the teaching of nature ; we will look solely at the opinions of men who have become familiar with truths to which the former ‘giants of antiquity’ were strangers. Lord Herbert in his fifth article lays down that there is a future state of rewards for the good and of punishment for the wicked. Mr. Hobbes, his contemporary, asserts distinctly the materiality and mortality of the human soul. Mr. Blount declared that we are to expect rewards and punishment hereafter, but that the soul is material. The Earl of Shaftesbury considered that “nothing can be more fatal to virtue than *the weak and uncertain belief* of future rewards and punishments.” Mr. Collins declared the soul to be material and mortal. Mr.

Chubb's statements, like those of Mr. Blount, assert both sides of the question; that there is a future state and that the argument for the immortality of the soul is unsatisfactory: that men are accountable to God and that he will judge them for injuries done to society; but that judgment is useless. Lord Bolingbroke held that there will be no state of future rewards and punishments: yet that the doctrine of a future state is politically a very useful one. Hume agrees with Lord Bolingbroke. Voltaire and his companions all held that the soul is not distinct from the body; that there is no resurrection, no futurity, no retribution, and that death is an eternal sleep. The Calcutta Deists are similarly divided. The Bráhmists fully believe in a future state, and in their works describe its character. The writer of the recent *Vindication of Deism* advocates it in distinct terms and with striking illustrations. (pp. 4, 5.) But Káli Kumár Dás thus speaks of the doctrine. "The fear of future punishment and the hope of future rewards do but little influence the conduct of men in this world. By a future state I understand a state which exists only in the minds of men and yet to come. Though virtuous men die they leave their spirits behind them, that continually go on working important changes in the human mind till the arrival of the happy era. . . . There is no probability of our going either to heaven or hell: Heaven and Hell are to be found in the human mind. These are the words of nature and those who consult her hear them distinctly." (pp. 209, 210.) Such is the 'sure teaching' of the great Deists on the most vital question upon which human reason ever entered.

f. Divine Revelation. Even on the subject of a special revelation they are not perfectly agreed. The English Deists almost universally deny both its necessity and its probability. Lord Bolingbroke however acknowledges that in speculation, nothing seems so proper to enforce morality, as a divine revelation: and Lord Herbert actually asked from God a special sign by which the truth of his creed might be con-

firmed. The Calcutta Deists also differ. Though nearly all rejecting it, the Bráhmas allow it to be desirable to a certain extent. "For a right conception of the purposes of his being and of his future expectations, the weakness of man's faculties requires to be propped up by that Providence to which he owes his being and the continuance of it; and hence arises the necessity of a Revelation." (*Ved. doc. Vind.* p. 34.)

With facts like these before them, the question which Christians ask is a very reasonable one. If the great authorities of Deism contradict one another, and hold the most opposite opinions, how are we to know the real doctrines of their system. Numerous scholars profess to study the works of nature, with a view to declare the lessons which those works convey to men. On proclaiming the result of their study, it is found that they all differ. Who then is to tell what the teaching of nature is? Who is to decide between the contending parties; whose judgment is to form the standard of appeal? We cannot believe both sides: we cannot leave the question alone. What is worst of all is that they are fully agreed upon nothing, except opposition to Christianity. On every one of those important branches of religious truth above mentioned, their disagreements and mutual contradictions are plainly stated. "The marks of design in nature prove there is a God:" says Lord Herbert. "These marks of design prove no such thing:" replies Mr. Hume. "There is a future life of rewards and punishments:" say some. "The soul is material: death is an eternal sleep:" say Voltaire and his companions. "Have not men a soul?" "No, the soul differs not from the body." Who teaches error here; who teaches truth. Lord Herbert would say Bolingbroke is wrong: Bolingbroke would insist that he is right. Left to themselves men cannot decide the matter, though on it hangs the weal or woe of their immortal soul. A vessel is traversing the mighty deep; the night is densely dark; rocks are near, but not a star shews where they lie.

Compass there is none ; opinions as to the vessel's course are mutually contradictory. Who shall decide the perplexity of the mariners and give them certainty for doubt ? *Let them wait for the morning light* and guide their way by the bright splendours of the glorious sun. Let Deists do the same ; amid the darkness of their creed, let them seek light from God. At least let them leave others to do so. If, in such utter uncertainty respecting a future state, we are dissatisfied and seek a divine illumination, why should they hinder us. They may love their darkness, if they will, and call it noon-day, but we will be guilty of no such folly. If Deism with all its vital contradictions "satisfies the longings" of their souls, it only proves how miserably small those longings are. But why should they demand that we who are hungering after righteousness should be satisfied to feed upon the husks of folly, which Voltaire and Hume and Paine have shelled out for our sustenance. They may assert, if they will, that the earth alone of its own power can produce bread for man, and requires neither sun-light nor the rains of heaven to fertilize it and make it fruitful. But we will ask for those heavenly rains ; we will look to that heavenly sun ; we will depend upon the Creator of all, and pray that He alone, who knows the full importance of truth, will guide our feet into the way of peace. In this *all nations have agreed with us*. The Deists and Atheists have ever been a miserable minority in the world, few in numbers and weak in influence. But the majority of mankind from the earliest times have believed in the desirableness of revelation : have believed it in the most enlightened ages as well as in the most rude. Numa and Lycurgus knew this well and made it serve their purpose. The Deists often boast of the improvements of modern society. Then surely they are themselves thoroughly behind the age. If physical science has become better known and has been placed on an unerring basis, the Deist's creed is where it was long before Lord Bacon was born. They are no nearer now to the settlement of the great question of a

future life, than they were in the days of Socrates. He doubted it in ancient Athens two thousand years ago: the Deists of Calcutta are not agreed upon it now. In morals and the basis of morality they are no better. But the morality of Christianity was perfect eleven hundred years before Socrates was born, and even before that Abraham and Jacob hoped for a permanent home in a better land than this. Why is the difference? That morality was not given *by man*; that *hope* was inspired by God.

ii. Had not the increasing length of this Essay forbidden, we should have endeavoured to exhibit, secondly, the *deficiencies* of natural religion; and to shew that upon several important religious questions, it is perfectly silent. Not only does it speak with complete *uncertainty* upon the questions we have already asked, but upon others, which souls convinced of sin ask with intense eagerness, it says nothing at all. (1) It provides *no Saviour* from sin. (2) It neither changes, nor removes that *sinful nature* in men from which sin springs. (3) It provides *no powerful motive*, in obedience to which men shall forsake sin and practise only holiness. These charges have often been brought against Deism, and have never yet been answered: while every new enquirer experiences afresh the deficiency which it cannot remedy. The Deists do tell us that *if a man repents of his sin, mourns over it and resolves to commit it no more, he will be forgiven*. But on their own shewing this doctrine is not learned from God himself: while it is directly opposed to laws which prevail both in the physical and moral world. To defend it they assert: "We see the transgression of an organic law punished with suffering and disease, and subsequently forgiven on the transgressor's returning to obedience and observing the rules of health."* This fact is *not universally true*, particularly in the case of men whose transgressions have been most numerous and glaring. Supposing that all men do suffer disease and pain when they sin (a statement which has

* Vindication of Deism, p. 5.

a thousand exceptions) yet there are many, very many cases in which though the sinner repents that suffering is NOT REMOVED. Many a *drunkard*, who has broken for years 'the organic laws' of health, repents at last, mourns over his folly, and gives it up. But his broken constitution rallies not and he dies in the prime of life solely from the effects of his drunkenness. Neither does his repentance remove the evil from others. His children have been born perhaps weak in intellect and weak in body: his repentance cannot make them intelligent and healthy. They are known as the drunkard's offspring, and the disgrace clings to them in the estimation of hundreds long after their father's death. Similar to this is the experience and history of many a licentious man. The *duellist* fights his antagonist; is wounded in the arm; and is compelled to have his arm cut off to save his life. The most bitter and sincere repentance will never restore his amputated limb. The *murderer* repents and gives himself up to justice; but his remorse does not restore the life of his victim. A *child* through carelessness fires a pistol at his sister and kills her. No measure of regret will recal her from the grave. An illustrious example of the truth of this reasoning is seen in the character and end of the Earl of Rochester. He died a thorough penitent, but his awful vices were the cause of his early death. The same fact is seen in the *moral* world. A man borrows from a friend ten thousand rupees and wastes the money. He subsequently regrets what he has done, confesses his error and resolves to go into debt no more. But do his sorrow and his resolution *repay* the money borrowed? How is it then, that men will assert concerning God what is not true even of themselves; and trust in a way of salvation from his wrath, which would be scouted among themselves as absurd. *Governments* cannot act on the Deist's principle. A lenient and merciful judge forgives every prisoner who asks his pardon and sets him free. He makes this a rule. As a natural consequence no man fears to do wrong, for he dreads no punishment; the country will

be speedily filled with robbers and murderers; and the very foundations of society will be overturned. By giving way to *mercy* only, all justice is set aside; and the law is disregarded. Will not the same result follow in the great universe of God, if the Deist's principle be acted on. If God forgive all who ask it, without requiring from them any satisfaction for his outraged commandments, men will cease to fear him; they will trample his law under foot; they will listen to no entreaty, regard no rights and be reckless of all consequences. That this is a fair deduction, the *fruits of Deism* plainly show. Without dwelling longer upon this part of the subject, we shall conclude, by describing those fruits.

iii. The *effects* of the religion of nature prove it to be *powerless* against human evil. Nature has undoubtedly spoken some truth to man, but even that he has refused to hear. It would have conduced to his happiness, but like an impetuous horse he has rushed on in his career of wickedness, unchecked by any restraints. Till the time when Jesus of Nazareth came into the world, almost all nations of the world were practically left to the religion of nature alone. How little they benefited by it, may be learned from a survey of their condition. They had wrong notions of the character and attributes of God. Their deities were countless in number and abominable acts were ascribed to them. Their rites were unchaste and frivolous. Prostitution was enjoined as a part of divine worship, and infanticide and human sacrifices were fearfully prevalent even in the most intelligent countries. The philosophers gave no check to this idolatry, but shared in though they despised it. In the days of Augustus, private manners were debauched in the extreme: and millions of men and women were held in hopeless slavery. Lying and suicide were openly sanctioned. The nations of modern times, who have learned from nature alone, have not been more benefited. Witness the Hindus, Chinese and Parsees. Among more uncivilized nations infanticide and cannibalism are practised to this day. In spite of these appalling facts,

one of the Calcutta Deists, anxious to prove the perfection of human nature, tells us : " All nations have gradually improved without the least interference of a supernatural being." The fact is exactly the other way : all nations that have not been under the influence of Christianity have sunk deeper and deeper into ignorance and immorality. The histories of Rome and India furnish striking examples.

But if it be said ; those were the ages of ignorance, turn to the enlightened scholars of modern days ; we accept the challenge. Let us look at the great Deists of the last two centuries. Lord Herbert, Chubb, Hobbes, Lord Shaftesbury and others all professed a high esteem for Christianity, while they did all they could to undermine and destroy it. In Christians such conduct would be called hypocrisy. Several of them publicly *professed themselves Christians*, by taking the Lord's Supper, in order to qualify themselves for political employment. The Earl of Rochester was the greatest profligate of his time. Blount shot himself, because his sister-in-law would not marry him. Hobbes wrote his ' *Leviathan*' in defence of Charles I. and then changed it to praise Cromwell. Voltaire and D'Alembert deliberately denied that the former had written the Philosophical Dictionary. Voltaire professed himself a Roman Catholic, at the very time he was teaching his followers to say of Jesus, '*Crush the wretch !*' He was a sensual profligate, an adulterer, treacherous to his friends, cruel, tyrannical, unworthy to be trusted. Rousseau was little better : so was Thomas Paine.

But far beyond this ; we have seen in modern times, within the last sixty years, the example, not merely of individuals, but of a whole nation, casting off a belief in revelation and plunging headlong into the gulf of natural religion in its worst form. When the revolution in France, in 1793, drove Louis XVI. from the throne, the Government set up was an atheistic government, and the greater part of the nation adopted the same creed. Reason was the deity whom all adored. The articles of the Deists' creed were publicly

adopted by the legislature. It was declared there was no God, no futurity, and that death was an eternal sleep. Public worship was abolished, and all the religions in the world were declared to be the daughters of ignorance, pride and priest-craft. All distinctions of right and wrong were soon laid aside. Debauchery prevailed to the most frightful extent. Proscriptions followed on one another and filled the country with assassinations. Social confidence was laid aside : relatives accused one another of crime and caused the death of their nearest kindred. All ties were severed ; all morality, justice, order were overthrown. It is computed that the religious principles then prevalent in France, *destroyed in ten years three millions* of lives, and wasted an immense amount of property. It was the only time when the religion of nature in its modern form triumphed on a large scale ; and THIS was its awful result ! Can it be, or was it ever, the will of God, the beneficent Preserver of the universe, that men should be left solely to the guidance of that Natural Religion, which is unable to cope with their lawless passions or restrain the rampant evil of their ruined souls. Is it not more than probable, that in His unspeakable compassion, He would reveal light in their darkness, truth amid their errors, and grant them *power* to subdue the evil to which they are naturally prone. Those who expect and desire such a revelation, cannot under the circumstances be considered unreasonable.

I have thus endeavoured to pass in review the distinguishing doctrines of the Vedántic and Bráhmist systems, and to show from the important errors which they advocate, that those systems are not from the God of truth. Bráhmism is one of the latest claimants in Bengal to the homage and respect of its population ; and bases its high pretensions on the authority of the Vedas. Had its standards advocated but one great error, that error would have sufficed to destroy their credit. But we have pointed out four of the most vital importance. The

system holds that the *Vedas* are inspired ; commends in relation to the poor the *worship of idols* ; teaches the doctrine of *transmigration* ; and maintains the institution of *caste*. How must these four errors combined tend to deprive the system of all credit as a divinely inspired system. Viewing it as a system of natural religion, we have seen how powerless it must be for good ; seeing that the *uncertainty* of the religion of nature, which is the same in modern as in ancient times ; its radical *deficiencies*, and its dreadful *effects*, render it utterly insufficient for the crying wants of fallen man, and therefore imply that a special Revelation from the God of all goodness is both *probable* and *necessary*. Little will they understand the object of this discussion, who think that it is carried on merely for the sake of securing a literary victory or glorying over the advocates of a weak cause. The work of a Christian man is a truly painful one, and in this country becomes most painful at the moment of its greatest success. It is no pleasure to a Christian to see young men, well educated and well disposed, avoiding the powerful claims of the revealed word of God, and fleeing to a 'refuge of lies' as a system of true religion. He has been taught that errors in religion lead to eternal ruin : and he has been commanded by his Master to follow, to warn, exhort and remonstrate with those who are going astray ; to point out their errors and endeavour to direct them to real truth. In this pursuit, he is to bear reproach and shame, to be the object of calumny, to be misrepresented and abused. He will be accused of destroying the peace of families, kidnapping young men and overturning all society. *But what else can he do ?* He must teach truth, whether men hear or refuse to hear. He must expose error : and I appeal to my reader's candid judgment, whether the errors of the Calcutta Bráhmists and Deists are not of the greatest importance. *Errors in religion ruin men's souls* ; and because Christians love the souls of Hindus and desire their lasting welfare, therefore they seek to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto

God. It is painful to cut off a diseased hand or foot ; but thereby the rest of the body is saved. Even so, it is sometimes required that men should pluck out their right eye or cut off their right hand, rather than they should fall wholly into hell. Thus it is that some must suffer now, but thereby multitudes will hereafter be saved. Let truth be successful now, and the cause of error must be thoroughly weakened. Think on these things calmly, weigh these discussions candidly ; *resolve to adopt no error* ; and enquire earnestly after God's truth. But if any will be obstinate in their unbelief, we may say with the servants of God in ancient times ; " If ye will not hearken, our souls shall weep in secret places for your pride ; and our eyes shall run down with water and shall not cease," because of the evil that must fall upon you. If in spite of all friendly warning, you still cling to these erroneous views ; if in spite of all reasons to the contrary, you will adopt only the religion of nature, then you must abide by the consequences. You must be content with its uncertainty in life, its cheerlessness in death. It will leave you without an atonement, without a Saviour : and in view of the great day of retribution, it will provide you only with an *accusing conscience, a violated law, and an offended God !*

PART III.

THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY.

“JESUS Christ came into the world to save sinners.” “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The religion, which teaches these wonderful facts, stands side by side with other religions in the world, all claiming a divine origin. Mahommedanism, Buddhism, Parseeism, Hinduism, and Christianity advance a like claim to the belief of their followers and of society at large; but the most enlightened nations, and the most learned men in the world, during a long series of ages, have declared that the claims of Christianity alone can stand the severest test which it is possible to apply to them. The proofs by which those claims are sustained are drawn from analytical and synthetical reasoning; from a-priori and a-posteriori arguments; from evidence within the Bible and evidence without it; from the character of the religion; from its history, its progress and its effects. So numerous and so varied are they, that it has been said, they might constitute a distinctive science, worthy of special study and bearing a special name. Yet men are found who deny the force of this accumulated evidence altogether; who called the Saviour of the world an impostor, and his religion a lie. Whence comes this curious phenomenon? It cannot be called strange; for every good thing in this world has met with opposers, and the better a thing is, the more certain is it to meet with them. Such is the antagonism of human nature. But the cause of this rejection of the Bible is easily discoverable. A search after truth must be honest and must be carried on in a candid spirit if it is to be successful. No-

thing so effectually hinders it as *prejudice*. The man who sits down to examine the Evidences of Christianity, determined beforehand to believe that that religion is false, that miracles are impossible, that all prophets wrote after the events which they speak of had taken place, that the morals of the Bible are 'borrowed' from nature, and that its influence is all imaginary; is not likely to rise from the study with a clear knowledge of his subject, or a just estimate of its worth. Such a man resembles Judge Jeffries, who condemned his prisoners before he had heard a word of evidence against them; and his spirit of enquiry, like that of this notorious judge, will surely be reprobated by right-minded men. Christianity asks a candid hearing for itself and for all systems of religion: from an impartial enquiry it has nothing to fear. It is only by misrepresentation and caricature that it can be injured. Such an enquiry we invite our readers to make. We believe there are in Bengal many, who are anxious to know which is the true religion: and that they may have some idea of the line of argument and the kind of proofs, by which the truth of Christianity is demonstrated, we have drawn up the following sketch of it for their aid. The candid enquirer will receive from Christian men all the help which their knowledge can give to his ignorance. But with those who misrepresent Christianity, who shut their eyes to the light of noon and call it midnight, they have nothing to do but warn them of their folly. When a man determines not to believe a thing, no possible amount of evidence will make him believe it. The mind is free: but where shall he find deliverance from men who voluntarily makes his mind a slave to prejudice? In taking a brief survey of the evidence adduced for the truth of the Bible, we shall look at various important points.

SECTION I.—THE HISTORY OF THE WAY OF SALVATION.

The mode in which the truth of God was first revealed to man and afterwards preserved, is so truly natural and suited

to men's circumstances, as to contain convincing proof that it is from God and not from man. The plan of salvation is so truly philosophical in its character ; it is based on such a perfect knowledge of man's wants, his lost condition, and the workings of his mental constitution ; and thus forms so clearly the only possible plan available for all men in all ages, as to bear proof on its very face that it must be the work of a divine author. This fact may be illustrated by the following considerations.

From the time of Adam the moral tendency of men was only downward : after the warning of the deluge, they still went astray ; it was apparent to all that a system of natural religion, though aided by the partial revelations already given to men, would not restrain them from evil : and that if the human race were ever to rise in holiness and happiness, a special system of agency must be employed for that end. Considering that man is a religious being ; that he will worship something ; and that he makes his object of worship the standard of his own conduct, there is but one possible way of bringing him back from degrading religions to the holiness which he has lost. It is not by teaching him philosophy, not by educating his intellect in a knowledge of the strict sciences, that this noble end is secured ; but by placing before him a pure object of worship, with the strongest possible reasons for choosing that object as his own, and giving to it his most hearty service and obedience.

That must be the *first* step ; to provide that object of worship and to reveal it in a special way. In doing so for the benefit of *all* nations, God might adopt one of two plans. Either he might make his plan simultaneously known to them all ; or he might communicate it thoroughly to one nation and spread it subsequently by their means. The former plan would be attended by this great disadvantage, that it would divide the world into sections, would make one nation independent of another, would isolate all and thus destroy that unity, which belongs to them as children of the same parents and is so necessary for their mutual good. The latter plan

was the only alternative and God adopted it ; not arbitrarily as some assert, but for the wise reason that it was best suited in its influence on men, *ultimately* to secure the end which such a new agency had in view. He accordingly chose a single nation, the Israelites, who were descended from Abraham, his most beloved servant. In order to save them from the idolatries into which other nations were sunk, he separated them from those nations and bound all the people together by numerous bonds of the strongest kind. They were descended from a common ancestor, were involved in one common slavery in Egypt, and were united still more by a common deliverance. These and other bonds have proved so strong, that to this day they remain unbroken ; and while other nations have been utterly lost, the Jews have preserved their individual existence to the very last. This step was first necessary. To carry out the plan still further, by attaching the Israelites to himself alone, as their object of worship, special means were adopted. Disinterested kindness always wins affection ; especially if wisely applied at the most appropriate time ; and such kindness he showed them when they most needed it. When they were sunk in the lowest depths of oppression and despair, He revealed himself to them as the loving God, their friend, and as the God and friend of their forefathers ; and then, by a series of the most stupendous miracles discomfited the idols of Egypt, proved the thorough superiority of his own Almighty power, with a high hand delivered them completely from their despot king, and set them on the other side of the sea, a free and independent people.

Having thus, in the most natural way, made himself the object of their grateful love he sought to preserve that love by special acts of providence. He fed them miraculously by manna ; poured water from the rock and saved them from their enemies. He then gave them a *moral law* to guide their conduct ; and impressed it deeply on their attention by terrifying displays of his Almighty power calculated to strike offenders with awe. He surrounded it by special ritual services,

suited to their circumstances, and calculated by appeals to their senses to satisfy their minds, while they tended the more thoroughly to bind the nation as one man, and separate them from other nations around them. By various institutions he taught them fully the holiness, justice, and mercy of his character, and shewed that while he hated sin, he was ready to forgive all penitents. By various punishments, inflicted at various times, he taught them that his law was not to be broken with impunity, while his blessings assured them that none could be obedient without profit. Thus he settled them in a land specially promised to them, as guardians of his revealed religion, as a nation serving the true God and shewing the way of forgiveness, though surrounded by debased idolaters. It was long ere they thoroughly learned for themselves the lesson which they were to teach unto others. Often did they fall into error, but he punished them at once and brought them back. When they obeyed they were happy; when they rebelled, they suffered. But the *object* was *accomplished*. During the worst ages of ignorance, when all nations were sunk into the most brutal and debasing worship, true religion was maintained amongst the Israelites; the knowledge of the ONE TRUE GOD was preserved; his way of forgiveness made known: and at length the time arrived for proclaiming these truths, as at first intended, to all the nations of the earth. It would be wrong however to suppose that these nations had been altogether excluded from such knowledge in the days of the Jews. The people of neighbouring countries learned much of the character and acts of Jehovah; many gave up their own errors to be his servants; that knowledge was carried to Egypt, to Asia Minor, to Assyria, and even to the great king of Babylon; Cyrus also, Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia, recognised and honoured the God of the Hebrews. Besides this, the progress of idolatry in other lands shewed the condition in which *all* would have been, had God left them alone; and thus furnishes an instructive proof of the uselessness of natural religion.

The advocates of natural religion forget this. Why is it that when *their* system prevailed, men fell more and more into sin ; while since the spread of Christianity the world has continually improved ?

As the time drew nigh when the knowledge of God and of his way of salvation were to be communicated by the Israelites to all nations, due preparations were made for the important era. The Jews, from whom all desire for idolatry had been eradicated, were scattered, to declare the doctrine of ONE GOD, throughout the civilized world ; and by their proselyting spirit, not only made their doctrines well known, but brought many to adopt their religion. When Jesus was born, Jewish prayer-houses were established in all the countries extending from Gaul to the Euphrates, and their proselytes were numbered by thousands. In carrying out the higher end, their ritual system was laid aside, but the same plan of elevating men was adopted as before, that of presenting to them a pure object of worship, the Holy God, and of inducing them to obey him with the affections of the heart. Jesus Christ became incarnate ; the Son of God took the form of man : "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." He exhibited before his countrymen a perfect character ; he taught them the moral law more fully, more minutely, than Moses did, and added to it the strongest sanctions and motives to obedience drawn from the doctrine of a future life. He set aside sense as the instructor of men in doctrine and worship, and substituted FAITH. He explained fully by his apostles the doctrine of *reconciliation with God*, through atonement, taught that that is the first step in a return to God and that it must be followed by an imitation of his own character. He confirmed his pretensions to be the promised Messiah, by the most wonderful miracles, and then gave up his own life as a sacrifice for the world. He is the embodiment of the love of God : He is the pure object of our worship ; and his self-sacrifice is the motive of our willing obedience. He commanded his followers to go to all

nations and teach them all that he had taught them. Thus Revelation is finished, and the plan of salvation completed. Our object of worship is perfect: the reasons for our obedience are perfect: the reward of faith is fully revealed: divine aid is promised to all who wish it. What more do men need to know? Since the death of Jesus, his followers have spread the knowledge of his salvation. It has not been confined to one people, but adopted by many. Many idolatries have been overthrown: millions of sinners have been brought back and are coming to this day. This is the history of the way of salvation. Is it not a wise plan? Do not its origin, progress, development and end, all shew that its author is divine: and therefore is not its perfect adaptation to the circumstances of men a warrant of its continued success, wherever it is received? Yes: it will *bring back all men*: it will draw all men from their errors, and lead their affections to him who has done so much on their behalf. Where do we find such design, such wisdom, such adaptation in Vedântism or the religion of Nature. "After that the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

SECTION 2.—WHAT CHRISTIANITY IS AND WHAT IT MEANS.

In spite of all that has been written and said in Bengal, during the last thirty years, great ignorance exists among even the better ranks of its people, concerning the designs of missionaries and the system which they teach. They are accused of enticing young men to profess Christianity by offers of money, of European wives, of large salaries, of horses and carriages, or of splendid houses. Whether seriously or not, the accusations are made even by those who ought to know better. A moment's consideration however

would shew that if that be the method chosen by missionaries of obtaining converts to their religious system, it is quite unnecessary to establish large schools and expend money upon education and christian literature. Among the money-loving bráhmans, surely many would be induced by the above considerations to make an outward profession of Christianity : and the number of converts would become a hundred fold what it now is. But such converts Christianity entirely repudiates : they can only be a disgrace and a reproach. As even among the most educated in native society, bad motives are constantly attributed to the proceedings of missionaries : and as recent public meetings shew that many native gentlemen are not too fond of truth to misrepresent it, it may be useful to state in few words WHAT CHRISTIANITY IS and *what is the end* which it has in view.

1. Christianity is *not* a religion which enjoins certain *external customs* and *ceremonies* as essential to its observance. It lays down no absolute rules as to what its followers must eat or drink ; how they shall dress ; how they shall sleep ; how they shall cut their hair, or clean their teeth. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink." It is not a beef-eating religion, nor does it compel any of its adherents to eat beef, turkey or any other species of food. In respect to food, it leaves every man to follow his personal taste or the manners of his country ; while it confines its attention to the weighty concerns of the immortal soul. "Neither if we eat are we the better : nor if we eat not, are we the worse." "Every creature of God is good, if it be received with thanksgiving." In the same way it leaves every man to dress as he chooses ; to build his house and plough his fields as his common sense dictates best. Its attention is directed to the important relations between God and man, between man and his fellows ; to the duties which they involve ; and the consequences which follow from them, both in this world and the next. On these subjects it teaches *doctrines* and commands certain courses of *conduct*.

2. Among these doctrines, first and foremost is the doctrine of ONE GOD, whose *various attributes* it repeatedly describes with numerous appropriate illustrations. It teaches especially that He is eternal, almighty, omniscient, present everywhere, Holy, Just, and merciful. It shews him to be the Creator and the Preserver of the universe : especially the Friend, Redeemer and Judge of men. It condemns *all idolatry* of every kind and degree.

3. It teaches that all *men* have a *common* origin, being the descendants of one pair, whom God created about six thousand years ago : and that however they may differ in country, language, colour, and habits, they are all made 'of one blood ;' are brethren possessing the same constitution ; are placed under the same dispensation of law and salvation ; and must be subjected to a common judgment. In this doctrine it is *thoroughly opposed to all systems of caste*, whether of ancient or modern times.

4. The Bible describes fully and perfectly *the law of God* which is to guide human conduct in all its relations. It shows that *sin* consists not in an impurity of the body, as touching a dead man, eating with another caste, or refusing to fast ; but in the wilful transgression of the commands of God ; in idolatry, ingratitude, blasphemy, theft, lying, anger, malice, covetousness and like faults. It shows that *all men have thus sinned*, and that because sin is a public evil in the universe, God the governor of that universe will surely punish it ; first that the transgressor may not do it again ; and secondly that others may fear to imitate him.

5. Again it lays down the principle, that *without atonement* there is no *forgiveness* ; a principle acted on daily among men : and that *men have no atonement* of their own to offer, *equivalent* to the crimes which they have committed. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? Shall I give him my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ?" No : "Lebanon is not sufficient for the fire, nor all

the beasts thereof for a burnt-offering." The atonement must equal the guilt: the ransom paid for each individual must be equivalent in worth to the immortal soul forfeited by his sin.

6. It then teaches, that God having known, from the first, man's utter inability to save himself, *in his great mercy* and compassion resolved to *send his son Jesus Christ*, that he might offer his life as an atonement for sin. Thus it was He became incarnate and died "the just for the unjust." "He is the propitiation for sin; and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." The first benefit of this atonement is the *forgiveness of sin*, including *deliverance from* the punishment which it has deserved. This benefit is not restricted or confined to any class; but all men may secure it, who *ask* for the blessing *for the sake* of Jesus Christ who died to make it theirs.

7. A second benefit of the atonement is the *removal* of the other great evil under which all men labour, *a weak and corrupt nature*. The man who trusts in Christ for the forgiveness of his sins shall have a new nature imparted to him by the Spirit of God. This is called *Regeneration*. Instead of loving and practising evil, he will then love and practise holiness: obedience to the law of his Saviour will be easy and will give him lasting pleasure. Those only who truly love Christ and are thus regenerated are regarded as true Christians.

8. The Bible teaches that *all men ought* to be Christians: all *need* the blessings of Christianity: God, the ruler of all, has given them for all: they are suited for all and can be received by all. Gratitude and obedience to God demand that every man when he hears of the love of God in Christ, should trust it for himself and pray for its benefits. He should then *publicly profess* his gratitude and faith, in the ordinance of baptism appointed for that purpose.

9. It teaches that *all true Christians* are to cultivate *habits of holiness*; to watch against temptations to sin; to

pray every day and study the Bible every day, especially during the rest of the Sabbath day; that they may learn more of the law of God and practise it more fully. It appoints to them also the duty of making known the way of salvation every where; in their families, their neighbourhood, their country and in all parts of the earth. It is by means of men who know the Bible that God wishes to invite and instruct those who know it not.

10. It teaches that such is the work of all Christians during life: and that after death *God will receive them into an abode of perfect happiness*; where they shall live for ever. *No souls will undergo transmigration*: but a great day is appointed in which God will judge all men, will vindicate his plans, and shew their wisdom before the universe, and will reward every man as his merits and his works deserve. On that day by a peculiar exercise of divine power, the essential elements of the bodies of men will be re-united to their souls: the righteous will enter heaven to leave it no more: the wicked will be cast into hell.

From this brief outline of the doctrines of Christianity, its DESIGN will be easily perceived. Looking on all men as lost in sin, and as treading the path to eternal ruin, it desires to preach to all men the good news of that mercy which God of his own free will has offered to them. It wishes to make known these doctrines, to establish a belief in them in all minds, and induce men to act upon them. It deals not with their bodies, but their souls; not with their wealth or rank, but with their judgments, their convictions, their feelings, and their will.

It wants no government force, no persecution, no compulsion, no seduction; but it wishes to *persuade men*. It wants no hypocrites, no false professors, no bought followers; but it seeks men who of their own free will give up error, devote themselves to the Son of God, and live as their profession requires them to do. By such persuasions only, it wishes to establish men in the truth. It of course opposes *all error*;

because error dishonours God, and injures men both in this life and the life to come.

From love to men, and because it seeks their welfare, it opposes Caste and Puranism: it opposes Vedántism, Bráhmism, Vaishnavism, and all other false systems of religion. They lead men away from God: Christianity reconciles them to him. In doing so it will endeavour to destroy the erroneous systems, but to save the souls of their followers.

SECTION 3.—THE MORAL PRECEPTS OF THE BIBLE.

Among the many proofs that the Bible is from God, the SYSTEM OF DUTIES which it inculcates occupies a conspicuous place. Many ancient philosophers communicated moral maxims to their followers and wrote treatises on various classes of moral duties; but none ever taught a *system*, complete in all its parts; much less did they ever teach a system, whose precepts were one and all accordant with reason and entirely free from defect. The same remark applies to the Deists of modern times. We look in vain in their writings for a faultless statement of all the duties which man owes to his Creator, his fellows and himself. Even in what they do teach we remark considerable *differences* between the various instructors. What some condemn, others oppose. What some enforce, others forbid. Thus Mr. Hume, as we have shown, declared that if a man would enjoy all the pleasures of life, he *must* commit adultery! Yet nature by the effects of such conduct directly asserts the contrary. Even in defining the very first element of a moral system, the *nature of virtue*, the ancient philosophers differ so widely, that Varro numbered no less than two hundred and eighty opinions on the subject. If they differed at the outset, how could they agree in all the details? Of how many *omissions* also are they guilty; passing by important branches of morals without one precept or rule respecting them. In how many cases did they teach *positive*

error. Again, the *motives* by which their maxims are enforced are all of an inferior kind. They refer their followers not to the fear of God, to be maintained at all risks and all sacrifices; but to self-interest, the desire for fame, the desire to please, the fear of reproach, and incentives of the like kind. What more could be expected from human nature in its present corruption, weakness and love of evil? What more could be expected from those who follow the impulse of passion and fear man rather than God? Can the blind lead the blind? Can one who is ignorant make his scholars wise? Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit?

But the *moral system of the Bible* possesses characters altogether of another kind. From the very first its voice has been certain and free from doubt. It has never taught one wrong precept, nor based right precepts upon erroneous motives to obedience. Already in the days of Moses, 150 years before the Vedas were compiled and 1,100 years before Socrates, it presents us with a *perfect system* of moral truth in the Law of the TEN COMMANDMENTS. If we examine these commandments but briefly, we shall see that they possess a simplicity, grandeur and completeness, which not one of the most enlightened philosophers of the world in any age has in any manner equalled. The ten commandments divide themselves into two branches: the *first four* embrace the subject of religion, our duty to God. The remaining *six* declare our duty to man, or *morality* strictly so called. In the first branch are included; (1) the command *whom* to worship, the true God: (2) *how* to worship; without an image to mislead us; in spirit and in truth: (3) the *spirit of religion*, reverence for all sacred objects: (4) a *day* of worship; that men might have a regular time for so great a duty. In the second branch, that of *Morality*, there is enjoined (1) obedience to *parents* and lawful authority: (2) respect to human *life*, and the cultivation of kindly intercourse with others: (3) respect to family *purity*: (4) respect to *property*: (5) respect to *truth* and others' reputation: (6)

the *subjugation* of those *desires* which give rise to all sin. The first branch is summed up in the sublime command "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength." The precepts of the second branch are all embraced in the brief injunction, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" which points out both the object of our love and the measure of it. *All law* is included in these two commands : and they again are included in ONE, the law of UNIVERSAL LOVE. Nothing can exceed the sublimity and completeness of this wonderful moral code. Yet it existed in the days of Moses and forms a part of the oldest book in the world, the Pentateuch.

In the other laws which were delivered by Moses to the Israelites the various branches of this system are fully developed and illustrated. All the varieties of duty, all the objects of duty, all the occasions of duty are plainly specified. Public and private life ; trade, commerce and agriculture ; social intercourse and public justice, are all regulated by suitable rules. Kings and subjects ; teachers and scholars ; buyers and sellers ; parents and children ; fellow-citizens and neighbours, all have their duties assigned. The *grand motive* to obedience in all cases and in all degrees is this ; "*I am the LORD, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt ; therefore love me and keep my commandments.*" No expediency is allowed ; none are to judge by what seems to their advantage or their loss. The rule of action is ; *God says it, therefore it must be done.* We may now ask in relation to this system ; Is it possible that it could be of man ? Moses, we know, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians ; but whence could he have derived the knowledge of such rules as these ? The Egyptians, civilized as they were, were brute worshippers of the lowest kind ; the cat, the dog, the lizard, were revered by them as gods : whence then could he have derived the purely spiritual religion which the commandments inculcate ?

The morality of Christianity bears a still higher character. Not because it gives any *new* command ; but because of the

wider application of the rules already enjoined, and the higher motives which it advances for obeying them. Thus it shews the wide sphere in which the law of love is to be applied: points out all men, in all countries, and of all races as its proper objects; while among Christians the love of their Saviour to them is appointed as the measure of their love to each other. It draws attention to duties which no system except that of the Bible ever described; such as the duty of personal humility, love to enemies and forgiveness of injuries. It declares that the *heart* is the seat of sin, and that evil lies not in the acts of a man but in his intentions. The Bible lays down no false principles: it permits none of the austerities which Hindus so highly praise: it allows no licentiousness to a favoured class, nor the performance of one duty to supersede that of others. So excellent is its morality that no man ever came up to it. Good, upright, benevolent and pure as many may be, they have never risen, and in this life never can rise, to the standard of virtue which the Bible records. The picture which it draws of a perfect man, of a perfect society, has never yet been seen among men, except in the case of the Incarnate Saviour who drew it. And when the world has reached that high pitch of intelligence, morality and religion which prophecy foretells, that picture will only be realized: it cannot be surpassed.

Whence did this wondrous system come? Its author and expounders say it is from God: and was given by him that men may enjoy light in their darkness and be guided by truth in a world of error. The Deists tell us that it is merely the invention of a superior mind, that had keener perceptions of the requirements of virtue than most men possess. Now the mind must believe that effects spring from adequate causes. But the Deists require us to believe that a Jewish peasant and Jewish fishermen, members of a most exclusive system, attained to the knowledge of a universal morality which the wisest philosophers in all ancient time never conceived. They require us to believe that *men of no education* and of low birth

were *better teachers* of true religion than *the best educated* and *most enlightened* moralists, who had made the subject their constant study. Let those believe it who can. For ourselves, we attribute so divine an effect to nothing less than a divine origin.

As far as we are aware, only two objections have been brought against the morality of the Bible by any Calcutta writers: (1) That it has very little direct reference to the practical concerns of this life: and (2) That it has been powerless to reform the world, because many Christians are so wicked: and therefore [we quote the horrible passage] "the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf out of the accursed book of God, before man can read the inscriptions on his heart." The *former* objection shews that the writer has not read the Bible, nor even the ten commandments. For its precepts are of a peculiarly practical kind and deal with all the minute circumstances, relations and duties of common life. It is to Deistic and infidel writers we must go for transcendental descriptions of the 'magnificent' powers of sinful and degraded man. It is they who shut their eyes to the corruption of his nature, to his moral inability; to the extent of his moral duty and the real character of sin. Christianity explains that duty with the minutest detail, and *enforces* it. 2. The *second* objection is, that the system is not from God; because among Englishmen there are found liars and swindlers, adulterers and oppressors. The fact we allow; with the reasoning we totally disagree. It is because thousands of Englishmen *do not obey* the Bible, that they present such a lamentable contrast between their practice and their professed principles. It cannot be said that Christianity has *no power* to change men, for it *has* changed millions: nor that they who really *love* Jesus Christ and follow the Bible are habitually guilty of all kinds of wickedness. The contrary is notorious. But it should be well understood that there are two classes of Englishmen, those who are Christians and those who are not. Allowing imperfection even in the

former, that does not diminish the glory of the Bible. To our view it adds to it. It shews there is within it a standard of excellence, which even good men cannot attain ; a standard superior to the virtue which even the best actually practise. *This proves* the Book to be *from God*, not from man : and as it is unjust to charge the defects of a wayward scholar upon his teacher ; so is it unfair to charge the failings of weak men upon the perfect God.

SECTION 4.—THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

AN additional proof of the divine origin of the Scriptures is found in the CHARACTER of CHRIST. To understand it well, we invite our readers to examine the accounts of his life contained in the first four books of the New Testament ; the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They will there find a description of one, whose like never appeared in any age or any country of the world. History records the names of many sages and many statesmen distinguished for different virtues. It tells us of the stern justice of Brutus, the happy contentment of Cincinnatus ; the self-restraint of Scipio. It praises Aristides for his justice, Cato for his integrity, and Socrates for his self-denying philanthropy. But where shall we find any one of ancient or modern days, in whom *all* virtues, *all* excellencies meet, without a single failure, except Jesus of Nazareth. “While all other men are formed by the spirit of their age, the character of Christ had no impression of the age and country in which he lived.” That character is represented to us as perfect, and that not in words, but by a detail of his sayings and his deeds. He is represented in many situations, as speaking with men of different ranks ; on a variety of subjects ; with enemies and friends ; in private and in public ; with his followers and with multitudes ; in duty and in suffering : but he is always consistent, always the same. No fault can be found with him in a single case.

Nothing can be observed unsuitable to the high character he professed to bear, or the glorious object for which he professed to live and die. As sustaining the character of a man, we behold in him *perfect love to God*. A *spirit of devotion* exhibits itself at all times in his delight in the works of God and the goodness they display; in his constant prayers; his giving of thanks; his submission to the will of God, especially on the night when he was betrayed. His *humility* declines the honour which admiring crowds would have offered; and children, strangers and poor rejoice in his *kindness*. His *gentleness* displays itself in a rebuke to those hasty disciples who would have called down fire on the Samaritan village, and in his last prayer for his enemies. *Prudence* leads him to deal carefully with the multitude, with the authorities of government and with his numerous enemies. Deepest *compassion* for human misery displays itself in the words and deeds of kindness performed for its relief; while under his own sorrows arising from the opposition and hatred of the proud hypocrites among whom he lived, he exercises the most perfect *patience*. There is nothing of impurity in his speech or act; no selfishness; no deception; no evil of any kind: while excellencies of the most opposite kind combine within him with perfect harmony. He was dignified yet humble; free from worldliness yet courteous to all: devoted to the good of all, yet a faithful friend: the Great Teacher but a loving son.

We must remember too that his biographers tell us *he was God*. Yet we find his character not inconsistent with such a claim. He acts like God and speaks like God. He teaches with great authority, as having power to set aside the Jewish ceremonies and to confirm their moral Law. He talks of heaven and hell calmly and without hesitation, like one who is perfectly acquainted with the subject. The *manner* in which all this is written is a warrant for its truth. The biographers of Jesus, though writing of the most sublime instructions and wondrous deeds ever taught or performed among men, tell their story with stoical calmness. We find

no splendid panegyric on their friend and master ; no flights of imagination in dressing up fine scenes ; no appeals to the passions of their readers. Their narrative of his wondrous deeds, words and thoughts is duly concise and beautifully simple. Even when they tell of his intense sufferings and agonizing death, they write like stones ; not one word of reproach against his enemies escapes from their pen. Yet in their discourses and their letters these same men speak with the warmest feeling and the most impassioned eloquence. Whence is the difference ? Jesus Christ is the incarnate God ; and his biographers were taught to write of him as such. He spake as never man spake ; and they write of him as man never yet wrote. If the accounts of the four Gospels *are false, the fact is infinitely more wonderful than if they are true.*

I shall close this brief notice of the Saviour's character, by quoting the description of his acts and the lessons deduced from them, written by one who will not, by Deists, be accused of partiality for his subject. The description is not from a 'hired priest,' but from an enemy of the Gospel, the French infidel Rousseau.

"I confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction : how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures ! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man ? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man ? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary ? What sweetness, what purity in his manners ! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery ! What sublimity in his maxims ! What profound wisdom in his discourses ! What presence of mind in his replies ! How great the command over his passions. Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation ? When Plato described his

imaginary good man with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ :—the resemblance is so striking that all the Christian fathers perceived it.

“ What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare (Socrates) the son of Sophroniscus to (Jesus) the son of Mary ! What an infinite disproportion is there between them ! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last ; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice ; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precept. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only has given us both precept and example. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophising with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for ; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonising pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it ; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes ! if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction ? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction ; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it : it is more inconceivable, that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose

truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."

SECTION 5.—THE JEWS AS WITNESSES FOR THE TRUTH OF THE BIBLE.

It is said that on one occasion, a large party of infidels, including the celebrated Voltaire and the great unbelievers of his day, was assembled around the table of Frederick II., king of Prussia. The conversation, as was natural, turned upon Christianity; and many were the hard and witty and contemptuous things spoken of its system of revealed religion. There was, however, one gentleman present, who, though he said nothing, intimated a hearty dissent from the arguments and conclusions uttered in his hearing. The king observed his disapproval and, hastily addressing him, said; "Come, M. I see you do not agree with us; now give us in the fewest possible words, a strong argument in favour of your Bible." The gentleman thus called on, replied; "THE JEWS; your majesty, THE JEWS;" and said no more. The assembly was instantly silenced, conscious that the existence of that most remarkable people is a phenomenon utterly irreconcilable with the Deistic theory, and an unanswerable argument for the truth of that Bible which alone describes their origin and history. For this reason we have introduced a short notice of them in this discussion.

Many of our readers may have seen some individuals of this remarkable nation. A few reside in Calcutta, and it would be worth the while of some of the opposers of Christianity to seek them out, look at their synagogue and its worship, and converse with them on their past history. These Jews are found in all countries of the world: in England, France, Prussia, Poland and Spain: in northern Africa, in Egypt, in Arabia, Persia, Hindustan and China: in Australia, in America. They have wandered every where. From the most trust-worthy accounts they seem at present to be about

seven millions in number. They are unlike other nations, in their features, their manners (which are quite oriental), in their notions, their worship, their ceremonies, their festivals, the doctrines which they believe, and the expectations which they indulge. They speak the languages of the country where they were born or in which they have travelled ; but they all learn another language, the Hebrew. That tongue is not spoken in any distinct country at the present time, but it is one of their bonds of union ; for it was the language of their fathers and in it their code of laws was originally written. A few months ago a colony of these Jews was discovered in China, which had been cut off, for hundreds of years, from intercourse with Western Asia, and had never heard the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But they have the same traditions, the same customs, the same ceremonies as all other Jews, and are looking for the same event, the coming of a great deliverer who shall unite them all again into one people.

The Jews unanimously declare that they once had a country of their own, the land of Palestine, and were driven from it on its conquest by the Romans. We can trace them back in history till we arrive at that conquest, an account of which is written in the works of the Roman historian Tacitus. There stands in Rome to this very day a beautiful arch of stone, erected by the conqueror, the emperor Titus, in commemoration of his victory, and it is known by his name, "The arch of Titus." It is proved by that arch that the Jews were the same people then as they are now in their religious customs : for pictures of the furniture of their temple, of its golden table, candlestick and trumpets are sculptured upon it. It is worthy of notice that the Jews never go under that arch, so painful is their remembrance of the defeats which it records.

Among their festivals is the *Sabbath*, which they observe on the last day of the week. Another is the *Passover*, of which they give the same account as is written in the Bible ; and which they say has been observed by them and their

fathers for more than three thousand years. They also keep other festivals, particularly one called the Feast of Purim. The origin of this people and of all their singular customs, festivals and notions is written *only* in the Old Testament, the former part of the Christians' Bible. No other book can explain it, except the Bible or works drawn from it. To that Old Testament they cling most strongly. Its language they learn as their own, as the only pure remains of the tongue which their fathers spake in the old time: and the correctness of the book they guard most jealously. One part of the Old Testament is also preserved by some enemies of the Jews, the Samaritans; and from them is called the Samaritan Pentateuch. But the words of both agree; a clear proof that they have a common original and that they are both true. The whole of the Old Testament was translated into Greek by Jews at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus nearly 330 years before Christ's birth and has been universally known since then by the name of the Septuagint. Now considering that it is utterly impossible to induce a whole nation to join in collusion for the establishment of a falsehood; or to persuade them that their ancestors observed customs and obeyed a Law which is newly brought among them, the fact of the Jews existing at this day with the Old Testament in their hands, and observing the ceremonies, the origin of which it alone describes, must be to all candid minds a proof that the accounts of that book are *absolutely true*. The only way in which their Book of Laws, which also contains the account of their origin, could be established among them, was by its describing facts which had really happened in their midst. Another confirmation of their part of the Bible, is that their present condition is actually foretold in that very book, which they hold so firmly, which condemns their conduct and points out their dispersion as the fruit of sin. The Deist cannot get rid of this fact. The Jews can be accounted for, in their present circumstances, their notions, their ceremonies, their expectations, *only* on

the supposition that the Old Testament is TRUE. But if the Old Testament is true, then the theory of the Deist as to revelation is erroneous: for the Jews received an undoubted revelation from God himself on Mount Sinai. The *New Testament* is also true; for it fulfils the prophecies of the Old Testament, fulfils its purpose, and shews the *end* of that method of universal salvation, the beginning of which made the Jews God's chosen people. To repeat; if the *facts* are true, the doctrines are true: they stand or fall together. If the facts are true, then the *miracles* of the Bible are true; and their *prophecies* existed long before their fulfilment. And that miracles were performed and prophecies thus uttered, proves that God is the author of the religion which they ushered into the World.

SECTION 6.—THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE.

Much sophistry has been expended by Deists, on the subject of the Bible miracles, and numerous efforts have been made to throw discredit upon them as improbable; the subject is however comparatively a simple one and involves scarcely any thing which the plainest intellect cannot understand. A *miracle* is a direct display of divine power, in a manner which differs from the usual course of God's providence. Man is possessed of some power and can exert that power in the production of various effects. God has almighty power and can therefore exhibit its effects to an unlimited degree. The works of man are superior to those of animals, and their existence proves that it is HE who has done them. In like manner the works of God bear marks of being the product of His hand; they surpass men's works far more than the latter surpass those of the inferior creation. If God wishes to perform such a work before men, it must bear all the marks of such superiority: and if a work bearing those marks really be performed, men must of necessity ascribe it to God. *The effect corresponds with the cause; the work with the*

producing agent. If the works of God only resembled those of men, it would be impossible for men to distinguish between them. Some men deny the possibility of miracles. How they can reasonably do so, we are at a loss to understand. If God has a certain end to accomplish, there is no reason why he should not work a miracle to accomplish it, if He sees fit : and it is not for men to tell Him, as they sometimes have done, what He ought, or ought not to do. Extraordinary objects demand the use of extraordinary means ; and miracles are the only possible way of proving immediately that any thing is from God. Now the purpose for which the Bible declares that its miracles were wrought was of no inferior kind. They were not intended to gratify mere curiosity. They were not performed in mere sport for the amusement of men ; nor were they done for any selfish motive ; nor in order to extol and magnify man. But they were wrought for the purpose of establishing the TRUE RELIGION, and of placing it on such a sure basis of divine authority, that no man who received the fact of the miracle should for a moment question the truth taught. Such an end was every way worthy both of the miraculous agent and of his agency.

Now men in general, so far from believing miracles unlikely and impossible, universally look for them on the establishment of a new religion, and *no religion can be esteemed divine unless miracles accompany it*. Such is the law of man's constitution. On this ground enthusiasts have sometimes persuaded themselves that they have possessed the power of working them : and impostors have almost invariably laid claim to it. Men naturally feel that if a religion be from God it must have marks of a godlike origin.

The question whether such miracles *have been* wrought is the chief point to be decided. Men are but poor judges of what God is likely to do ; but he has given them ample means of knowing what He *has done*. Miraculous facts, when they occur, must be proved by the very same rules of evidence, as those by which the ordinary events of human life are esta-

blished : viz. by the evidence of men's senses, well weighed by their judgment. To such a test the miracles of the Bible may be subjected without fear. They are in *number* not one or two, which might be attributed to mistake or chance, but very many. When the Israelites were separated from the Egyptians as the depositories of true religion, in order to convince them *who* was their deliverer from their galling bondage, a series of *ten* most stupendous miracles was performed upon the largest scale : the truth of which is attested to this day by the festival of the Passover intended to commemorate their result. Here was no whispering of bráhmans behind their temple door ; no cooking of the uppermost in a series of rice-pots within closed doors ; the *whole land* of Egypt was involved in these miracles at one and the same time. The Nile became blood before *all eyes* : frogs, lice and locusts covered *the whole land* : the hailstones swept the whole country ; the whole land was shrouded in darkness ; and the firstborn of all families died. In the New Testament about *fifty* miracles are mentioned ; though the number performed must have been much greater, several being sometimes described in few words ; "he healed them all" and so on. Again, these miracles are not solely of one kind, they exhibit *great variety*. In some cases common diseases were healed ; in others a cure was performed on the lame, the blind, the deaf, the leprous ; those who were maimed received a new limb ; while on a few occasions, the dead were raised again to life. The works of nature were subject to this agency. Fire was made to fall from heaven at a special time ; storms were raised, and storms were stilled : a river was turned into blood ; a sea and a river were divided in twain. Rocks, earth, sky, sun, light and darkness were all made to exhibit the interference of miraculous power. The *manner of their performance* also proves their truth. They were wrought not in some secret place before a few interested friends ; but openly, publicly before assembled multitudes. At the prayer of Elijah fire fell from heaven in the presence of thousands. Jesus Christ

fed thousands with a few loaves. The miracles were wrought before enemies : and the worst enemies of Christianity have acknowledged them to be true. Julian, Porphyry, Celsus, and many opposing Jews fully allow that Jesus and his apostles did the works ascribed to them. They were done, too for *the good* of men. Rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, benefited by them. They were not useless displays of power ; but were remarkably suited to the ends they had in view. Thus the miracles of Moses were calculated not only to prove the power of the true God, but tended directly to overthrow all confidence in the idols of Egypt ; Osiris, Isis, Serapis, and the Nile. Those of Jesus taught the compassion of the Gospel and that love of God, of which he was the bright expression. Similar was the end of the miracles of the Apostles. They were never wrought for *their* benefit, and they were all performed with a dignity and a simplicity befitting their high aim.

That these miracles were actually performed, it is impossible for a candid man to doubt, so clear and abundant is the evidence in their favour. The accounts of the New Testament miracles were published at once, while thousands who had seen them were still alive ; they were published, too, among enemies. Yet not one of the ancient objectors denies the truth of a single miracle. Let it not then be said that the stories of these miracles are 'airy and unsubstantial.' No facts in the world can bring better evidence in their favour than do these. No one can appeal to stronger testimony than that of the enemy who wishes to destroy him.

Rámmohan Roy, with a view to throw discredit on the miracles of the Bible has said ; " Mussalmans can produce records written and testified by contemporaries of Muhammad, both friends and enemies, who are represented as eye-witnesses of the miracles ascribed to him." Here the Rajah has fallen into considerable error. Muhammad always *denied that he could perform miracles*. He has denied it in the Korán over and over again and *has assigned a reason for*

it. He says : " It is not in my power to perform miracles : but the appearance of the Korán is a miracle in itself." " They have sworn by God, by the most solemn oath, that if a sign came unto them, they would certainly believe therein. Say : verily signs are in the power of God alone." " Thou art commissioned to be a preacher only and not a worker of miracles." " Signs are in the power of God alone, and I am no more than a public preacher." The reason he assigned for his inability to work them, was that men had disbelieved miracles in former times. " Say : apostles have already come unto you before me with plain proofs and with the miracles which ye mention ; why therefore have ye slain them, if ye speak truth ?" " Nothing hindered us from sending thee with miracles, except that the former nations have charged them with imposture." In these passages Muhammad both denies that he was a worker of miracles and asserts that the *Christian miracles were true*. The Rajah's own witness gives evidence against him. The miracles ascribed to Muhammad by others, so far from being testified by contemporaries, were according to the statements of Muhammadan writers, not committed to writing till 200 years after his time, by Hamu Ibn Bokhari, Quduni and others.

But Christians are called upon to believe the miracles of Tárakeswar, if they believe those of the Scriptures. Is there really no difference between the two cases ? Is there no difference between the pretended wonders wrought by interested bráhmans, for the honor of their idol and their own profit, in a Hindu temple ; and those wrought over a whole country in the presence of thousands, for the good of all, by men who were only persecuted for their pains ? In cases of the former kind the Roman Catholics have played their part well ; and if Christians chose, they could, in the manufacture of such miracles, beat the cunning bráhmans hollow. But the miracles of the Bible are altogether free from such defects. They were cognised by men's *senses*, were performed publicly, in open places, where jugglery was impossible ; were done

with good reason, and have monuments and ceremonies commemorative of them, observed to the present day. We would draw the attention of our readers especially to the miracles of Moses [Book of Exodus]; to the story of Elijah [1 Kings, xviii. chapter]; the cure of the paralytic by Christ [Mark, ii.]; the raising of Lazarus from the dead [John, xi.]; the cure of the lame man by Peter and John [Acts, iii. iv.]; and most of all to the different accounts of the Resurrection of Christ. The last mentioned miracle is commemorated to this day, by the change of the Sabbath day (among Christians) from the seventh day of the week (as among the Jews) to the first day. This miracle by itself proves the Christian religion to be incontestibly the revealed truth of God.

SECTION 7.—THE PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE.

The Bible contains numerous PROPHECIES of future events, which furnish an additional argument in favour of its inspiration. The argument from prophecy is perfectly distinct from that derived from miracles: and, except in their origin and design, which are the same, the two kinds of proof are completely independent of one another. Each is sufficient of itself to prove that the Bible must be from God, but God has given them both to make the conclusion, which they lead to, the more sure. Besides they serve different purposes. Miracles exhibit the divine *power*: prophecies the divine *knowledge*. Miracles display *at once* the intervention of divine authority; Prophecy exhibits it to the men of a *future* time. While the force of miracles does not diminish; that of prophecy increases with every new fulfilment. This branch of the evidences of Christianity is amply deserving of the most attentive study on the part of a candid enquirer. By prophecy is meant the description of some future event which it is beyond the power of human sagacity to conjecture. The calculations of Astronomers declare the time of future eclipses and the localities of the heavenly bodies at different periods.

Sagacious men often conjecture correctly events that may happen within a limited time. But they cannot go further ; all their calculations depend upon the fact that the course of nature shall *continue* as it is. Prophecy has declared far more than this : and has affirmed that that very course of nature, shall come to an end. The knowledge of events distant some hundreds of years, of events which concern not only the world at large, but the happiness and the condition of families and individuals to be born, cannot be known to any but the Omniscient God. The man, therefore, who claims to be a messenger from God, and gives a specimen of divine foreknowledge in proof of his claim, must, by the fulfilment of his prophecy, be acknowledged as such a messenger. The only questions to be ascertained are ; *was the prediction delivered before the event occurred ?* and is it beyond the power of human sagacity to utter ? The answer to these questions in relation to the prophecies of the Bible is clear and decisive. A great portion of those prophecies is contained in the Old Testament and was fulfilled in the time of the Emperors Augustus and Tiberius. But the Old Testament was completed, more than four hundred years before that time, was translated into Greek by the order of Ptolemy Philadelphus and spread among all the provinces of the Roman Empire. Both then and ever since it has remained in the hands of Jews, who as a nation are enemies to Christianity ; yet from their books, numerous proofs of the truth of Christianity are obtained. The character of the prophets of God confirms their pretensions. They were not men who sold the secrets of futurity for money, (as astrologers and soothsayers pretended to do :) they were not men of wicked habits, flatterers of kings, covetous and hypocrites. They made no secret of their power ; yet they did not boast of it. They spake with candour and openness, in public places, in the ears of all. The *design* of their prophecies was good. They were not intended to gratify a vain curiosity, but were spoken to confirm the truth of the word of God ; to comfort

the church of God in persecution ; to encourage the servants of God in their labours ; to justify the dealings of God's providence : to exhibit His Omniscience : and to develop his plans of mercy. The great *number* of the prophecies is a proof of their truth. They are found in all parts of the Bible, from the book of Genesis to that of the Revelations. They embrace a great variety of subjects ; the birth, name, character and death of individuals ; the locality, character and history of nations ; sometimes of nations that were not in existence when the prediction was announced. These prophecies are not only numerous, but *minute*. Aristotle and Cicero, when discussing the subject of the ancient oracles, tell us that impostors always prophecy in general terms and enter into no details of the exact *time* and *place* and *circumstances* under which an event will occur. The remark is true down to this day. But the prophecies of the Bible are not of this kind. They specify names, places and times exactly : they describe the details of an event, all its attending circumstances and the manner of its occurrence. They tell of uncommon events ; of occurrences the very opposite of what might be expected : they foretold even supernatural events, the coming of storms, earthquakes and famines at a *particular time*. So numerous and full are these prophecies that they form a continuous chain, descriptive of events that have occurred in the course of SEVERAL THOUSAND years and are occurring to the present day, not in one place only but in many countries of the world.

To understand and value these facts rightly, we would entreat our readers not to throw down the whole subject as a piece of folly, but to examine it thoroughly for themselves. Let them read the prophecies in the Bible, and compare them with the events to which they relate and which history describes. There are two admirable books which fully illustrate the subject and will therefore be invaluable to a candid enquirer ; viz. '*Bishop Newton on the prophecies :*' and the very popular work '*On the fulfilment of prophecy ; by the*

Rev. Dr. Keith. We invite them to study the matter with care and to enquire and compare as deeply as they can. We have nothing to fear except from a *neglect* of the study. We do not hide our prophecies as the Roman senate hid their Sibylline oracles; but we invite all to read and judge for themselves. In illustration of these prophecies we might refer to the prediction concerning *Ishmael and his descendants*, the *Arabs*, which declared that they should ever be independent and free as the wild-ass; and which has been fulfilled to the letter. Or we might tell of that concerning *Tyre*, which, in the days of that city's greatest wealth and power, declared that it should be desolate and a place where fishermen spread their nets. Or again of the prophecy concerning *Egypt*, or *Babylon* or *Nineveh* or *Ethiopia*; all of which have been fulfilled without a single error. *Egypt* has long ceased to be a great kingdom and to have a king of its own nation. *Babylon* was taken by Cyrus during the drunkenness of a feast, and has been for hundreds of years a possession for the bittern and for pools of water: it has become heaps and swamps, and the den of wild beasts. Fire devoured the palaces of *Nineveh* and the river broke down its walls; its site was so lost for centuries that Voltaire declared it had never existed. But the ruins of its palaces have been brought to light and confirm in every point the account which the Bible gives of them. All these things, and many others like them happened, as prophecies had minutely foretold them many years before they took place. When Babylon was in its greatest glory, Daniel prophesied its conquest by the Medes and Persians; the destruction of the Persian Empire by 'the king of Grecia;' the division of Alexander's Empire into four kingdoms; the establishment of the Roman power; the rise of Popery and that of Muhammadanism. *Cyrus* was spoken of *by name* 200 years before his birth; his *adopted* religion was referred to by the prophet Isaiah; it was declared that he should take Babylon by stratagem and should order the temple of Jerusalem to be rebuilt.

There are two subjects on which the testimony to the truth of prophecy is most ample ; and the force of which the utmost ingenuity has never in the slightest degree invalidated : viz. the prophecies concerning *the Jews* and those concerning *JESUS CHRIST*. Obedience to their covenant with God was the condition of Jewish prosperity ; adversity was appointed as the chastisement of disobedience. Moses their lawgiver distinctly acquainted them with this rule of their Heavenly King : and foretold most specifically the punishment which should finally fall upon them if they refused to obey it. ' They were to be scattered among all nations ; to find no rest in their wanderings ; to be oppressed and degraded, and feel no assurance of their life.' They were to be few in number among the heathen, to pine away in sin, and to be an astonishment and reproach. They would suffer dreadful famines so that in the siege of their city, the mother should devour her child for very hunger. A nation from afar, ' as swift as the eagle flieth,' of fierce countenance and foreign language, would come upon them, encamp around them, destroy their government, destroy myriads of lives, and sell so many into slavery that ' no man should buy them.' Jesus Christ added to these prophecies. He foretold the signs by which the destruction of Jerusalem should be preceded ; such as wars and rumours of wars among all kingdoms of the world ; earthquakes, famine and pestilence ; signs in the heaven, the appearance of false Messiahs, and the preaching of his Gospel to all nations. He foretold that the Jewish government should be entirely destroyed, the city so overthrown, that one stone should not be left upon another, and the people every where carried captive : he also declared that these things would happen before the present generation had passed away. All this came to pass to the very letter : not one word fell to the ground. The son of Vespasian besieged the city of Jerusalem, overcame the factions which held it and expelled the Jews. The temple was accidentally burned, and fell to ruin. In the time of Adrian, in the second rebellion of the

Jews, its every stone was removed and a temple of Jupiter built upon the site. The readers of Josephus cannot fail to see how thoroughly his story accords with every letter of the predictions of Christ.

The prophecies concerning the SAVIOUR of men are the most extraordinary; their minuteness makes them resemble the after-description of an event, instead of its prediction: and the curious contrasts and particularities they contain render it utterly impossible for human sagacity to have conjectured them five hundred years before their fulfilment. The *family* from which he should spring was pointed out, the tribe of Judah and the family of David. The *time* was exactly defined, before the destruction of the Jewish state, 490 years after the command of Artaxerxes to re-build Jerusalem, and while the temple was still standing. The *place* was named, the town of Bethlehem: a fact which gives great weight to the prophecies concerning him, when we remember that it was not his mother's residence and became his birth-place in a very singular manner. It was also foretold that he should be born of a *virgin*; that he should have a *fore-runner* to announce his coming and prepare the people for it; that he should be of a *mean condition*, should be despised by his countrymen, though possessing *higher rank* than man can possibly conceive; that he should be eminently endowed with the *Holy Spirit*; be perfect in *moral character*, just, righteous, humble; that he should sustain the *offices* of prophet, priest and king; and that he should perform *miraculous works* for the benefit of the afflicted. His last *sufferings* are minutely detailed. The price of his betrayal (thirty pieces of silver); the purchase of the potter's field with it; the flight of his disciples; his personal ill-treatment; his death, not by the Jewish method of stoning, but on the Roman Cross; the thieves crucified with him; his cry of agony; the division of his dress among the executioners and particularly the casting of lots for his seamless coat: the offering to him of the stupifying vinegar: were circumstances distinctly enumerated by *different* prophets

who wrote at different times. His burial in a rich man's tomb; his resurrection after three days; the outpouring of the Holy Ghost; and the establishment of his church were all foretold, and EVERY WORD *came true*. There is no room here to say that the prophecies succeeded the events. No fact is better proved than this, that the Old Testament complete existed three hundred years before Christ was born; and to this day those very passages are in the hands of Jews, the enemies of the Gospel. They were written, they were fulfilled, in him and in no one else. From whom can they have come, but from Him who knows all things, to whom the future is known as clearly as the past, the Omniscient God: and who gave them that his Bible might be proved to be from Heaven.

I shall add but one word here. Kali Kumar Das allows, that Dr. Keith 'has most admirably proved that the events which occurred in human society, after the declaration of the scriptural prophecies were in *perfect accordance* with their literal meaning.' But then he explains the fact by a reference to a new 'faculty' in the mind, the desire of prophecy-ing, a faculty which he himself possesses in a strong degree; aided by the 'science' of Astrology. Human reason and Astrology did it all! We trust the Babu will not for the future call Christians *credulous*. 'A Hindu' again invites Christians to believe in *the prophecies of the Puráns* which are not susceptible of various interpretations as are the prophecies of the Bible, 'which are *set forth in clear, definite and precise terms* and are *being daily accomplished* in this age of the Kali Yuga." If such prophecies exist, why does not 'A Hindu' (1) PRODUCE them, prove them to BE prophecies, shew their fulfilment, and (2) BELIEVE in them himself. He will thereby confer great service upon the system of Puránism which he now seeks to destroy, and upon the cause of truth at large. But if he *cannot* do so, he must bear all the consequences of making a random assertion and of compromising truth for party purposes! Let him

remember too, that *true prophecies in one book do not invalidate those in another.*

SECTION 8.—CHRISTIANITY A UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

Great varieties exist among the nations of the earth in their notions, customs and habits. Their religions also greatly differ, being much affected by their peculiar ideas; scarcely one therefore is applicable to any other nation than that from which it sprang. Muhammadanism was the first religion that claimed to itself the character of a universal system; and even by it, the claim was not advanced at the outset, but was put forth when Muhammad began to succeed in his views. But the claim is futile. The rules of the Korán shew that they arose in an oriental and tropical country; and to such countries alone are they really suited. It would be against physical possibility for the northern and southern nations of the earth to keep the Ramazan from sunrise to sunset; their day varying in length with their latitudes to as long as *six months* of the year. Though there are differences among men in some things; in all that constitutes them MEN there is a perfect unity. The bodily structure of all nations is the same, their mind is constructed on the same principles. The same rules and conditions of health govern the former; and in the latter, there are the same intellectual faculties, the same laws to guide the reason, the same affections to exhibit its results. Men hold the same mutual relations every where, and their moral nature is subject to the same principles. In the real basis of their nature, therefore, men are everywhere perfectly alike. In that nature lie all the causes of their error and their misery: and if the true God in compassion to their infirmities provide a system of religion applicable to that nature and to its general laws, it will apply at once to all men in whatsoever country they may happen to dwell. Christianity is such a religion. Its great facts, doctrines and lessons deal not with the exter-

nal differences of food, dress, language, manners and personal habits by which nations and individuals are distinguished. It has no bed of Procrustes to which every man must submit, no laws of caste, no tyrannical custom to which nations, for whom it is unsuitable, must bow. It does not command mountaineers to eat fish in Lent, nor fishermen to abstain from flesh on a Friday. It enjoins no diet to one people, which another cannot procure. It leaves all such things entirely alone. It deals with the fundamental constitution of man's nature ; with that in which all men are alike, whatever be their country, their language or their skin. It governs not their actions but their hearts ; not their external gestures, but the spirit which produces them ; not their mere words, but the condition of their conscience and their will. Its precepts concern them as men. Its laws look upon all men as holding certain relations with God and with each other, *because they are men* : and those laws describe the duties which those relationships involve. It bids all men love God with supreme affection : because they are his rational and responsible creatures, and He is their Creator, Preserver, Saviour and God. It commands all men to love each other as children of the same father, and to live together as brethren. It looks upon them individually, socially, politically and lays down precepts suitable to them in each case. Personally they are to be holy, devout, obedient, not loving the world, expecting to die. Socially, parents must educate their children, and children obey their parents. As members of society, all men must be honest, truthful, pure, benevolent, courteous towards one another. Kings must be just : subjects, obedient to the law : servants faithful to masters, masters just to their servants. All men must seek the good of all others. All these precepts are expressive of relations in which every human being is involved, and therefore they are adapted to every heart. No man can possibly be beyond their influence. There is no exclusiveness in Christianity. "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that worketh righteousness,

is accepted of him." The poorest Bengali has as much interest in Jesus Christ's salvation as the great Queen of England. "The same Lord over all is rich in mercy toward all who call upon him." *All ranks* come within the operation of its commands. Again, the Bible is adapted to all *capacities*. It does not say that a man must be 'intelligent and educated' before he can be a Christian, but it 'preaches' its doctrines 'to the poor.' It has no 'inner' system reserved for a favoured few: no 'mysteries' kept for higher and lower grades among its followers. All are alike: Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. Neither has it favourites, who are allowed some license in evil denied to others. Its doctrine is applied to all, and is so simple that all can understand it. Repentance towards God; faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; a renewed nature practising the duties of a holy life: these are the truths which run throughout the Bible and which millions of the poor have eagerly received. For such classes it has peculiar sympathy: the philosophers despised them: the bráhmans fleece and condemn them: Christianity declares the poor, the fatherless and the widow to be God's special care. Thus applied to the fountain of all action and the spirit of all conduct, Christianity is suited to nations possessing various external manners of life. It is suited to various forms of government, though it enjoins one spirit in them all. Again it is a balm for all the woes of life, for all the troubles, cares, disappointments and sorrows to which our race is subject. To mourners of all kinds and of all classes it speaks words of comfort suited to their case. Best of all, it can cure all the miseries of the world by forbidding all its sins. It passes by not a single error, a single crime, great or small, and thus leaves not one source of misery untouched. If its commands were perfectly obeyed, all political disorders, wars and tumults; all social discords and family quarrels; all individual sins and secret faults would cease; and the pains, punishment and sorrow caused by them would be dried up. Deism is but a quack medicine, that has multiplied the disor-

ders it professed to remove. Christianity is the real panacea which the world needs. Looking at its basis and the character of its precepts we see it is thoroughly calculated to be a *universal* religion, applicable to all nations and all the individuals of whom they are composed. The fact is further shewn by the number of people that have embraced it in different ages. It were long to enumerate them all, though the list would be most instructive. Europeans, Asiatics and Americans; shepherd-races, tillers of the soil, and manufacturers have received it. English, French, Dutch, Germans, Spaniards, Russians, Hungarians and Swiss; Tartars, Chinese, Persians, Arabs and Syrians: Copts, Egyptians and Mauritians: the Hottentots, Bushmen and Bechuanas; Islanders of the South Seas, Negroes of the West Indies, and Indians of North America: enlightened and barbarous; slaves and free men; under the government of despots or under free institutions; individuals of these nations and many others have received the Gospel of Christ, as the message of mercy to them and all men. What religion but Christianity ever produced a fact like this? It is the religion of universal man, because it comes from God over all blessed for ever.

SECTION 9.—THE EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

Jesus Christ on one occasion speaking to his disciples concerning some pretenders to revelation, laid down the following rule as the test of their truth; "Ye shall know them *by their fruits*." "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." The great infidel Hume asserted in full accordance with this precept that "*Error never can produce good*." The principle is the same, in other words, as that to which we are led by the necessities of thought, that an effect *must* correspond in character and degree to the cause which produced it. It is therefore readily understood by all men and is daily and hourly acted on. The application of it to Christianity furnishes another kind

of evidence for its divine origin; the effects of the religion of the Bible being far superior to those which any human cause can produce. Apply the same test to Deism. If true, it has nothing to fear from enquiry, in whatever light it is viewed. We have seen however, in the conduct of its great advocates, the practical fruits of the debasing principles which they adopted and avowed. The fruits of Christianity are of another kind. They may be examined in connection with *societies, families and individuals.*

When Christianity began its career, the Roman Empire, the civilized and enlightened world, was in the most degraded condition possible. The cruel shows of gladiators were the people's most exciting sport. The law permitted infants to be exposed, even by the mother's hands. Slaves were deliberately and publicly murdered without their masters suffering any punishment. They were counted among the goods of a household, with the horses and dogs. Suicide, theft, lying, assassination and the most debasing sensuality were practised, in some cases defended by the wise philosophers of the age. The idolatry of the most profligate deities, accompanied by human sacrifices and hateful vices, was the custom of all classes, and men were punished even with death for opposing it. In a family, a father could sell his children: the wife could divorce her husband, and the husband his wife at pleasure. Profligacy was universal: chastity was scarcely known. Public honour, public faith were acknowledged as a name, while the influence of Senators was at the service of the highest bidder. Look on the same people, in the same countries, three hundred years later. The temples are empty; human sacrifices, infanticide and temple-prostitution are abolished. The gladiator-shows have almost wholly disappeared. The condition of slaves is much ameliorated. Vices and misdeeds are now reprobated and punished by laws. Those laws are administered by a more honest, just and trustful government. Wives are reckoned their husband's companions and children as the delight of their parents. Where

there was no education, instruction is provided : where no mercy was felt, institutions of public benevolence have been established. Where human misery was unnoticed, there the sick are visited, the mourner comforted, and bereaved children are cared for by their parents' friends. The whole tone of society has been elevated ; virtue, morality and religion are honoured and practised. Whence has this mighty change arisen ? Who has stemmed the awful torrent of evil which was rolling over the empire and which had increased and swollen in dreaded magnitude for more than three centuries ? Who has more than restored the pristine virtues of the ancient Romans, which the vices of the Augustan age had thoroughly destroyed ? CHRISTIANITY has done it all. It is not education ; not philosophy ; not legislation ; not the progress of the human mind. The philosophers never reformed themselves or their disciples (as Cicero tells us ;) and always conformed to the religious practices of their time. Christianity has done it and Christianity alone. Gibbon, the infidel historian of the Decline of the Roman Empire, *distinctly allows the fact*. Twelve men, uneducated and poor, the companions of Jesus of Nazareth, began to proclaim a fact, that he had risen from the dead ; and to preach the doctrine that his death was the Great Atonement for all sin. They began to preach in the city where he had been crucified, among his murderers and enemies. They were persecuted and imprisoned, but multitudes believed them. They were all scattered abroad. They preached throughout the Roman Empire, and the result was the REFORMATION of that Empire ; the removal of its dreadful vices, the establishment of order and peace, religion and morality. Can Christianity be from man ? With its simple story, and its simple teachers, it did what ages of philosophers and illumination had failed to do. "When the world by wisdom knew not God : it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Christianity is a religion of purity ; it is a religion of power. Is it not from God ?

After the first three centuries it became gradually corrupted ; not in its origin, the Bible ; but in its practice and doctrine. Men mixed their own views with its precepts : bad men professed to be its teachers : and by degrees its outward form and system were filled with error. Its real power was not called forth. But even in its weakness, it gave abundant proof of its high origin. When the savage tribes of Germany became connected with the Roman Empire, the spirit of its professed religion soon began to affect them. They left off human sacrifices, they learned the difference between right and wrong. The Scythians ceased to use the skins of their enemies for clothing ; the Heruls no longer put their aged to death ; the aborigines of Ireland gave up cannibalism. Suicide on principle declined among the Scandinavians ; and their wives no longer sacrificed themselves that they might enter the Valhalla of Odin. The Northmen gave up their piracies and all the nations learned to live in peace. The Goths, Danes, Norwegians and others received from Christianity a written language. Many barbarous laws were repealed in all the tribes, and a spirit of benevolence began to take their place. Christianity put an end to Druidism in England and subsequently civilised the ferocious Saxons. The English owe every thing to Christianity, which alone has made their country wise and good. The slavery which followed the barbarian conquests gave way to its law of equal rights between man and man : and to its spirit, female society in Europe owes the high honour and respect in which it is held. Much of this was accomplished in the middle ages. Since then, so corrupt has been its form in most countries of Europe, that the progress of its benefits has been interrupted and in such lands its power has ceased to be exerted. But wherever the Bible is taught, and its truths in all their simplicity and purity proclaimed, there virtue and morality, in all their extent, steadily continue to advance. One of the Calcutta Deists writes that the present position of England is owing to the invention of printing and to the spread of the Baconian phi-

losophy. He forgets what it was, that printing spread abroad. It was the BIBLE, copies of which were multiplied faster than they had ever been and were received with the greatest avidity. Printing is not an end but a means. The result depends on *what* is printed. In England men printed the BIBLE, and it was by the increase of Scripture knowledge that the people were so improved. Nor must English greatness be said to have sprung from the Baconian philosophy. That was not known till the reign of James I. : whereas the period, in which the English people began to exhibit the most active intelligence, clear-sighted views and an earnest attachment to true religion, was the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The Bible taught them the philosophy of common sense, referred them to their own minds for fundamental principles of reasoning, shewed them that the doctrines of revealed truth accorded with the notions of their nature, and thus led them to put all knowledge on a firm basis. The Baconian philosophy is the *result* of such a spirit, not its cause.

In modern times, the truths which Christianity first taught and the power which it first developed, have exhibited riper fruits and that on a more extensive scale, than they ever did before. In countries called Christian it has gone deeper into the evils of society, especially into the ignorance, irreligion and misery of the lower classes, and is every hour making successful efforts for their removal. Its institutions of benevolence ; its numerous schools, its hospitals, its asylums for the orphan, the blind and the idiot ; its schools for the deaf and dumb, asylums for penitent women, houses for the poor, churches for the poor, societies for the cheap circulation of the Bible and of good books, and the like, have increased to an astonishing degree. These institutions have not been established and sustained by the government ; but they are the result of private benevolence and private gifts of individuals. They have been established, not by literary men for literary purposes, nor by government for political aims ; but by Christians for the promotion of the knowledge and prac-

tice of true religion and of true morality. They have been established by Christians, not for fame, nor praise, but because the founders had a CHRISTIAN DUTY to perform in doing good to others, after the example of their Master ; and because the promotion of religion is both a private and public benefit. It is on this account that every Christian remembers, with honest pride and true delight, that while a complete copy of the Vedas, if procurable at all, can only be purchased, in the Sanskrit language, at a heavy cost, the poorest man in England can buy the Bible in his own tongue for EIGHT ANNAS and the New Testament for two ! The effect of all this is seen in the steady improvement of the whole country. There are in England, thousands of thieves, hypocrites, infidels, adulterers and liars ; but in spite of the mighty evil yet existing there, religion and morality continue to advance. A higher tone of morality pervades all society than existed sixty years ago. Vices which were openly practised by the higher classes have slunk into retirement. The education and the comfort of all classes have been greatly increased ; new sources of enjoyment have been opened to them : they exercise new rights : a tone of order and obedience to the law widely prevails. This is the result of the benevolent efforts called forth by the Word of God.

More than this : while effecting so much in England and America, among a professedly Christian population, the churches of Christ have put forth most powerful efforts to convert and elevate heathen nations. By means of foreign missions, they have conveyed the knowledge of the Bible to almost all the countries of the world in modern times. Expeditions which science and philosophy have not been able to undertake ; expences at which their followers would stand aghast ; have been successfully undertaken by Christian men. The missionaries of Christ's Church from England and America, 1,200 in number at this day, are labouring to promote not merely the education of different tribes and nations but their *reformation* from sin. More than *sixty lakhs of rupees*

are annually spent in their labours, and at least *twice that sum* in those countries themselves for the benefit of nominal Christians. The *result* of their labours has been the same now, as it was in the days of the apostles. Idolatry, cannibalism and infanticide have fled from the islands of the South Seas; and thousands upon thousands of debased savages have become worshippers of the true God, enlightened in their understanding and moral in their lives. Hottentots, Caffres, Fingoes, Bechuanas, many of whom had no idea of God, have been blessed with the same benefits. The dull inhabitants of Greenland: the fierce warriors of the North American Indians, have been subdued, elevated and christianized. It is the spirit of benevolence enjoined in the Bible which put down slavery in the West Indies; and has forbidden Suttee, infanticide and human sacrifices in Hindustan. Churches of Christ have been gathered from among Chinese, Hindus, Persians, Armenians, Jews and Greeks: among men of all nations in Europe: among the Negroes of Africa and the West Indies: among the natives of the Cape Colony, the South Seas and North America. In all places the same *power* to change bad men into good has attended the preaching of the gospel now, as attended it in the days of old. Men have tried to produce such results by civilization and have failed; but they always attend the full and faithful preaching of the gospel. What is the reason? It is this: that *God* who gave the Bible, makes its words powerful, to accomplish the end for which that book was sent. It is because He blesses it that men are compelled to hear and to obey it.

The *wonderful transformation* of individuals by means of its instructions is a clear proof that it is accompanied by a divine power. It repeatedly happens in connection with the preaching of the gospel, that men who hate its doctrines have their minds suddenly arrested by some Bible truth or statement which they cannot get rid of. An impression is made upon them which they cannot efface; sins that they have done appear in a new light and they feel afraid of their

deserved punishment. Nothing can exclude these thoughts from their minds: no pride, no argument, no pleasures to which they can resort. They find peace only in accepting the gospel which they have rejected and honouring as their Saviour that Jesus whom they have despised. Henceforth they are new men: with new views of religion, new conduct, new joys, new hopes. Such sights have been common in connection with the gospel in all ages: and special cases, such as those of the Apostle Paul, the infidel Earl of Rochester, Colonel Gardiner, and John Newton may at once be referred to. Heathen lands in modern days present such instances; such as that of Africaner, the scourge of the Cape Colony, who became a meek and humble Christian, lived the rest of his life usefully and died in the joy of the gospel. How is it that Deism has never produced fruits like this? How is it that philosophy and education have never led to such results? They may to a certain extent help to preserve morality in a moral man: but what religion except Christianity ever took a man from the depths of wickedness and made him at once within a few days, '*a new creature*,' ever after holy in his principles and holy in his conduct. 'This is the Lord's doing;' for such a divine effect, we cannot but look to a divine power, acting in conjunction with the divinely revealed word.

Contrast with the pure principles, holy lives and benevolent exertions of true Christians, the principles and conduct of the great Deists of modern times. It is notorious that it is not among the latter as a body that we must look for men of truth, of purity, uprightness, self-denial, and active efforts in the cause of benevolence. It is not among them, as a body, that we shall hope to find just masters, faithful servants, excellent fathers and obedient children. But such are expected among Christians, and the exceptions to the rule are noted as defects. We have already mentioned the character of some of the Deists. We would beg the reader to study them all: and when he reads of the profligacy, hypocrisy and immora-

lity of which nearly all were guilty, let him ask himself can such corrupt practice spring from right principles? Let him compare their character with that of the most eminent Christians, with that of Newton, Locke and Boyle; with that of Milton, England's greatest poet, and of Cromwell, her greatest ruler; with that of Howard, Clarkson, and Wilberforce, her great philanthropists; with that of thousands of others, who shone in moral excellence *because* they were Christians.

Finally observe the effects of Christianity in the *happy deaths* of its disciples. No period of human life is so calculated to try the strength of men's principles, as the sensible approach of death. Hinduism has been tested by it and failed. The religion of nature has been appealed to for its consolation. But alas! as it was uncertain in life, it is found cheerless in death. Let the candid enquirer examine the death-beds of the great Deists and judge for himself. Hume in his last hours diverted himself, when with others, by playing games of cards or by similar trifles: but he was afraid to be left alone, would always have servants and lights in his room, and still passed his time in dreadful terror. Hobbes could never speak of death without pain, and was miserable if left alone in the dark during his last illness. Voltaire recanted all his opinions and felt unspeakable horror at the conviction that he was to be judged by the Saviour, whom he had so awfully blasphemed. His companion D'Alembert died in similar circumstances. Tom Paine in his dying hour, being told by an attendant that she had burnt his 'Age of Reason,' expressed a wish that all his readers had been as wise, and added: "If ever the devil had an agent upon earth, I have been one." The followers of Brahmsm cannot furnish more happy illustrations. "Oh! sir," said one of them on his dying bed, to a missionary who had visited him and in whose school he was taught; "Oh! Sir, I have no helper." Another Hindu, who had given up faith in the Purans of his fathers, was exhorted by a missionary to believe in Christ and pray to him for pardon. He replied; "I thought you knew

better than to advise me thus : is it not written, ' Whoso denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.' Thirteen years have I known the gospel ; I rejected it, and I now feel it is my condemnation." The wretched man died in despair. Contrast these scenes of terror with the triumphant rejoicings of the Apostle Paul. Shut up in his Roman prison, condemned to die in ignominy and disgrace, and shortly expecting to be violently put to death, he writes : " I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight ; I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith." His is no solitary case. Thousands of martyrs have met death as firmly : and have sung their hymns of triumph at the gibbet and the burning stake. Ten-thousands of Christians in their private dwellings have left a similar testimony, proving that the hopes of the gospel had delivered them from all fear, and enabled them to rejoice that with this sinful world they had no more to do. No single instance has ever been known of a Christian giving up his religion in his dying hours, as insufficient for his spiritual wants. No man ever regretted, on his death-bed, that he had served Jesus Christ with his best powers all his life. Can the followers of Natural Religion speak thus ? Looking then at the *effects* of Christianity upon individuals, families and nations ; in times of health, in hours of sorrow, and in a dying day ; in the time when it began, during the ages of its depression, and in modern times ; not in one country but in many ; not among civilized people only but among barbarous tribes ; we ask the readers to judge : Is not the Bible the revealed book of God ? Look at the extent of its effects, their great variety, their superlative excellence ; look at the removal of evil, the increase of religion by its means, and say, Can this be man's work ? What philosophy, learning, experience could not do, the doctrines of the Bible have done. Why is this ? It is from God. " If this doctrine were not of God *it could do nothing.*"

The meagre outline of evidence for the truth of the Christian religion which has now been presented to the reader may help him to form some notion of the kind of proof and the amount of proof which can be adduced in its favour. It must not be imagined that all has been said which might have been advanced. Far from it. Whole volumes have been written on each one of the arguments brought forward, and to those works the attention of the enquirers is invited. We have merely presented an outline of the evidence. We have noticed, first, that if the Creator of the world intended to give a revelation to man, the circumstances of our race required that it should be given in the very manner in which the system of the Bible was actually communicated. We have described, secondly, the doctrinal system of the Bible; then its moral system and the character of our great Teacher and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Fifthly, we have shown that the Jews furnish undeniable evidence of the truth of the Bible; and that the miracles it describes and the prophecies it contains, prove it to be inspired by the God of all power and of perfect knowledge. We concluded by shewing that Christianity is a universal religion, and that its effects are entirely super-human. *Each* of these proofs is *of itself sufficient* to prove the divine origin of Christianity. A doctrine such as man could never have discovered, is accompanied by a moral system such as he never yet conceived. Both are confirmed by miracles, and these again by prophecies. The effects of Christianity stand apart from them: while the fact that it alone of all the religions of the world can be truly and in every respect a universal religion is another and independent fact in its favour. If each of these proofs is sufficient, what force do they not possess *when combined*. So strong is their mass of evidence, that it becomes impossible to believe that Christianity can be false, unless we suppose a universal deception of the senses, intellect and feelings of the millions who have received it. If any man wish to disprove the claims of Christianity, he must disprove all this evidence; not one branch only but the whole

of it: each branch supports the others and must be deprived of its individual force. The opposers of Christianity must defeat not merely the right wing of our mighty army, but its left, its centre, its reserve. The cavalry, infantry and artillery; the main body, the van, the rear must all be defeated in detail, before they boast of victory. Again and again the Deistic forces have assayed battle, but never once have they succeeded. Every phalanx, every battalion, every line, of the Christian army remains unbroken and uninjured to this day. To this day the fact remains unshaken, "There is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby they may be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ."

X. It might be shewn *tenthly*, that the truth of Christianity shines forth with greater clearness, from a consideration of the *objections* which have been brought against it. Those objections are numerous, but not one of them invalidates the claims of the Bible or sets aside one branch of the evidence in its favour. They affect chiefly particular passages of the Bible, and all arise either from misunderstanding, misconception, imperfect knowledge, strong prejudices, or a desire to get from revelation what it cannot possibly give. There are doubtless difficulties in the Bible: a book from God must, of necessity, contain some things which men will find it hard, if not impossible, fully to understand. But the majority of these difficulties give way to careful study and increased knowledge: and what is a difficulty with a young enquirer has long ceased to be such to an experienced Christian. The great error lies in a man *setting up his own imperfect knowledge* of its contents as the *standard* by which the Bible and all its followers are to be judged; a test, we need scarcely say, which is most unfair. The objections of Calcutta writers are not original, being but re-productions from the stock in hand of English Deists, which have been refuted again and again. Want of time and space are the only reasons why we do not enter upon them. Let them be weighed against the mass of evidence on the other side, and a candid man must allow, that

if a difficulty arise, it must be attributed not to the Word of God, but to his own imperfect perception of its meaning. Whatever difficulties there be in that word, they cannot excuse unbelievers from explaining the still greater difficulty of the Bible's wonderful success. "Christianity *exists*, and those who deny the divine origin attributed to it are bound to show some reasons for assigning to it a human origin. If Christianity were not established by miracles, it demands an explanation of the greater miracle, its having been established, in defiance of all opposition, by human contrivance." If Christianity be true its wonderful success is natural. If it be false, that success is the greatest miracle the world ever saw, and it becomes necessary for unbelievers to account for it.

CONCLUSION.

We have thus endeavoured to present our readers with an account of the chief systems of religion, to which their attention is now particularly called in this part of India. We have described the Vedantic system of Vyas and his disciples, the Vedant of the Upanishads, the Brahmissm of Calcutta and the dogmas of Deism. We have pointed out what appeared to us to be their most palpable errors, inconsistencies and self-contradictions. We have drawn an outline of the argument which proves the truth of the Christian religion and have stated what that religion is in its nature and design.

1. Let the reader now COMPARE these systems together ; both in the general and special features of their character. He will first notice that they are all systems of monotheism ; advocating the existence of one God. Vedantism is monotheism in its most degraded form, the pantheistic ; a form which almost identifies it with atheism ; a form which professes to spiritualize creation, but in reality materializes God. We have little fear therefore of the spread of the pure Vedantism of the *Upanishads* and *Bhagabat Gita* among the educated people

of Bengal. The question lies between the Religion of Nature and Christianity. Having examined them separately, let us briefly compare them with each other. Deism, that is, the Religion of Nature in its purest form, is Christianity in its infancy : it is only the *first* Chapter of that great Book which reveals the character of God to man. Deism is a religion suited to man in the first stage of his history, when he had the wish and the power to learn from God's works how to reverence and love him. But there it stays : while Christianity is that Deism perfected, by new methods and agencies adapted to man in his fallen state, as a sinner subject to his Maker's anger. Deism reveals God only by his works ; Christianity, both by his works and his word. Deism tells us some truth : but Christianity tells us *all that* and a great deal more. Deism is the foundation of the temple of truth : Christianity is that temple complete in all its vast proportions, and perfect in its undying beauty. Deism *may* be the religion of sinless angels : Christianity is the religion needed by sinful man. Again ; Deism in its descriptions of the present state of man tells us but half the truth : while Christianity tells the whole, unpalatable though it be. Deism therefore deceives men : Christianity opens their eyes. Deism can offer nothing for the future ; Christianity offers every thing great and good. Deism speaks conjectures concerning it : Christianity tells us facts. Deism leaves us in doubt : Christianity helps us to repose on what is certain. From Deism we learn what is possible : from Christianity, what is *sure*.—For Deism tells us the loose reasonings of man ; Christianity the solid words of God.

Let the reader compare these systems again in their particular branches. Look at the *basis* on which they respectively stand. Deism professes to be derived solely from a study of the works of Nature and to convey to man the lessons which they teach. Brahmissm makes a like claim and superadds to it a belief that the Vedas are revealed from heaven. The grounds of that belief have been already fully discussed and their insufficiency manifested. Christianity declares itself to

be God's message of mercy to a sinful world ; and presents to all men an array of *evidence* in support of that claim, such as no system of religion except itself has ever pretended to possess. Its doctrines and precepts are worthy of the claim : and those who taught them performed divine works and spake prophecies as proofs of their commission. Compare again the *authorities* in which the systems are described. The origin of the Vedas is unknown ; they are unsuitable for the poor ; they contain great errors ; they can scarcely be procured ; they contain but little useful knowledge. The *Bráhma Dharma* is simply a modern compilation, reproducing some of the errors of the Vedas and adding others of its own. The authorities of Deism, the great writers on the system, disagree with each other, contradict each other, and agree on almost nothing. The Bible is a book for all men. Its authors are named ; the time when they lived is known ; it takes up the subjects on which men need information ; it warns them of their sins, teaches them of another world and shews them how they may be forgiven. Its topics are simple and practical. It deals with men as men ; and therefore all men can understand it. Its instructions are supremely wise ; its influence supremely moral and beneficial to man. Compare also the *contents* of these authorities. Look at their respective views of *God* and of *his Character*. The Vedas teach us pantheism, the doctrine of *máyá* and of absorption into Brahm. Brahmissm tells us that God is "without love." Deists deny that he really has justice or exercises providential care over the world. The Bible gives us the most exalted view of his perfections, describes Him as a Being beyond human conception ; and tells us things concerning his nature and doings which cannot be human inventions. Especially does it magnify his compassion to man and his forbearance against sin. Compare once more the views of these systems concerning the *Works of God*. While the Vedas teach Pantheism and foolish science, and the Deists merely expound what creation tells, the Bible informs us of the origin of the

universe and the use for which it was intended. It likewise declares the lessons it teaches concerning the goodness of God ; but with a decision, authority, and fulness to which no Deist writings can lay claim. As to *man and his wants*, the Vedas teach but little that accords with his own experience. They charge him with ignorance of his origin and nature, but do not touch the disease from which he suffers. The Brahmist and Deist systems treat him no better. The Bible lays his condition before him in plain terms ; describes the symptoms of his disease, shews that it originates in a corrupt nature, develops all its workings and declares the ruin which must follow. Compare these systems in the *remedy* they apply, and *the way of Salvation* which they advocate. The Vedas recommend meditation and idol-worship as the cure. The Deists urge man to reform himself. The Brahmists adopt both these plans. The Bible points man to God : it shews that Salvation cannot be secured by human efforts only ; it explains how the Son of God became incarnate to atone for sin, and how the Spirit of God will renew the nature of all who seek forgiveness through Him. Examine the *Moral Rules* which these systems lay down. The Vedas scarcely touch this question. The Deists in some cases defend immorality. The Brahmists base their motives to virtue on the lowest grounds. But the moral laws of Christianity and the example of Christ in whom they are illustrated are perfect. No merely human being has ever yet attained the standard which they lay down. Compare them also as to their *applicability* to universal man. The Vedas confine themselves to bráhmans alone. The Bráhmas defend caste in theory and practice. Christianity opens its arms to all men. *Examine* the *prospects* each holds out to its followers. The Vedas promise absorption to the highest grade of their disciples ; high rewards to others below them, and transmigration to all but the favoured few of the highest class. The Brahmists advocate transmigration likewise. The Deists know nothing certain of a future world ; some advocate its existence, others

deny it, and thus on the most important question to which man ever gave his attention, they can give him no sure instruction. The Bible speaks with decision on the matter. It promises a heaven of perfect joy to its true followers for ever: and warns the wicked of a hell of eternal punishment. Compare lastly the *results* of these systems. What have the Vedas done for Hindustan? What has Deism done for its followers? What have been the fruits of Christianity in private, social and national prosperity?—Look at these various topics of our discussion. Compare these rival systems in relation to them. In all Christianity stands foremost. In no one point is it excelled by others. It is *true in itself*; its doctrines are perfectly wise; its results are perfectly good. Its prospects of eternal blessedness surpass the highest conceptions of mortal mind.

2. The argument for Christianity has never been fairly answered, it is indeed unanswerable. But that is not all that Christians desire. Victory in discussion is not their sole aim. Men may be silenced without being convinced. What they wish is to see men become Christians by the ready submission of their affections and their will to the law of Christ. He only will become a true Christian who feels the *need* of a Saviour: he only will ask for pardon and life, who feels that he is a sinner lost for sin. Until he feels that want and is struggling with such convictions, his heart will not be bowed down in humility before the Holy God. He may call himself Deist, Brahmist, or Christian; it matters little: if he has not felt in his heart the evil of sin, a sense of his own guilt, a desire for mercy and a hearty gratitude to the Saviour of men, he cannot be a true servant of God. In our view, it is the heart of man which is the seat of religion; “with the heart a man must believe unto righteousness;” with the heart he must feel, with the heart he must love: his name is a trifling matter. We therefore reckon men true Christians who are not only convinced that the Bible is the book of God; but who feel its worth and love its Giver.

3. I entreat my readers therefore to look into their own

hearts and candidly enquire whether they have fairly viewed the claim which Christianity has to their warmest love. The Bible is sent to all men. It says to all : ' You are sinners in the sight of God : your whole constitution is ruined by sin ; and the punishment of sin hangs over you. That punishment is awful to bear. It is eternal pain of the severest kind ; it may include bodily suffering ; but it is certain to involve the more bitter suffering of a soul in despair. But God knew this evil ; and in love to you he warns you ; in love He sent his only son Jesus Christ, to offer a sufficient atonement upon the cross. Believe in him as your Saviour : pray for his Spirit to change your hearts : to give you right understanding and to free you from the power of sin.' I ask you my readers calmly and prayerfully to weigh this claim. I speak to those who are anxious to know what is right, and entreat you to settle this question at once before you die. The God of heaven is your Creator, Preserver, Benefactor. You are his in every way and by every possible right. Yet you have lived as your own : and if you now reject the offer of his forgiveness, perhaps it may never be presented to you again. He has said that the doom of the man who knows the Gospel and rejects it is the severest of all punishment. " It were better for that man that he had never been born." " How shall we escape if we reject so great salvation." " If he that despised Moses' law died without mercy (convicted) by one or two witnesses ; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, he shall be worthy, who [by his unbelief] hath trodden under foot the Son of God ?" I appeal then to you by every sacred motive to accept without hesitation and without reserve the mercy which is freely offered to you in Christ. I appeal to your sense of duty : I appeal to your gratitude ; I appeal to your sense of justice : I appeal to your self-love ; I appeal to your conscience ; whether you ought not to be a Christian before you die. Your safety, your interest, your peace of mind now, your everlasting happiness point out this as your immediate duty.

4. Some few may say: 'We are Christians: only we have not professed ourselves so. We have merely declined being *baptised*.' In this proceeding, however, there is a great deal of self-deception. Jesus Christ appointed that his true disciples should be baptised, that they might thus make a *public acknowledgment* of their faith and love to him: and you ought therefore in obedience to him to profess his name by baptism. But if you decline the baptism, there is something which, if *you be* a Christian you will surely do. All men who are truly grateful to one who has preserved them from prison, preserved them from debt, will ever honour their benefactor. Gratitude is both wise and proper. If you are true Christians, you must be grateful to that Saviour who died for you, and has given you the glorious hope of everlasting life. Then proclaim your gratitude. Tell your friends how much you honour the Saviour who has redeemed you from hell: praise his name; shew forth your love; obey his law; tell your friends that because your benefactor commands it, you will esteem all men as your brethren; that you will not worship their wooden idols, nor obey the Hindu shastras, nor observe the rules of Hindu caste. Tell them all *that*; and no one will object to your delaying your baptism for a short time! You feel you dare not do it. You are not prepared for that course of bold and honest gratitude. If you are not, **THEN ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?** Let your own conscience answer.

5. There are many difficulties in the way of a public profession. None can feel them so thoroughly as Christians do. But they must be met in a manly spirit, and with the *help of God*. Few know the acuteness of suffering which Missionaries and others undergo, when they see the agonising struggles caused by a Hindu leaving his caste to become a Christian. The father gives up his son, the mother her first-born; and beats her head in anguish on the ground. They send him forth as an outcast, with the curse of his father's gods. I ask my readers candidly to say: *Whose fault is this*: at

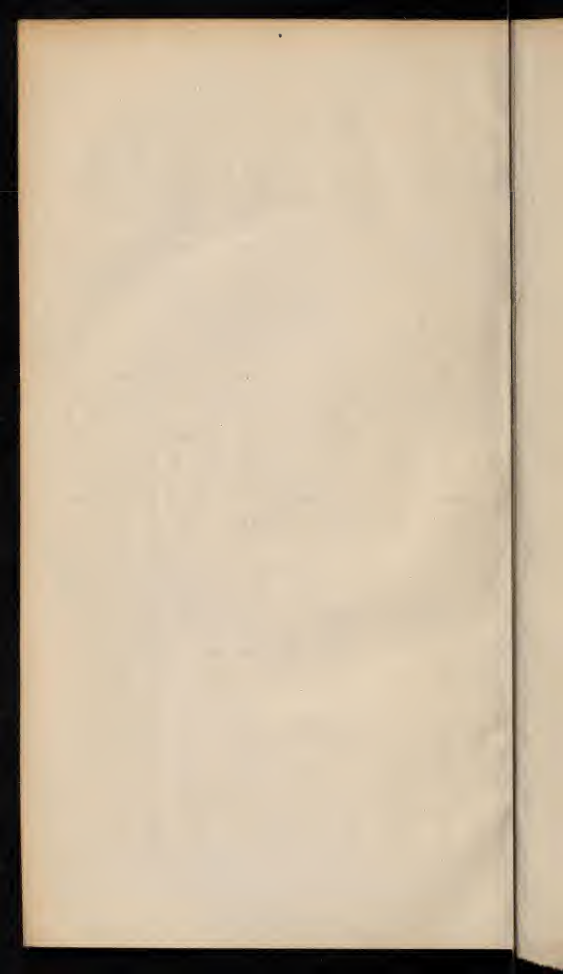
whose door shall all this anguish, this crying injustice be laid? I deny, in the face of all men, that Christianity is to blame. *The fault belongs to Hinduism and Hinduism alone.* I charge it upon the unrighteous system of CASTE; upon that curse of Hindustan that has blighted its prosperity for three thousand years. I charge it upon all the defenders of caste; upon all who in any way maintain its rules and uphold its discipline. On this point Christianity is guiltless. Yet Jesus Christ knew the trial, even when on earth; and he laid it down as a test of his disciples that "HE THAT LOVETH FATHER AND MOTHER MORE THAN ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME." The Brahmas may say, that 'parents are a present deity;' and thus rob God of the supreme love which is his due. But the Bible says, "Call no man father upon earth, ye have one father even God." He is to receive supreme love, and the man who loves ought more than him is an idolater. In the great famine of 1833, how many parents forsook their children, how many children forsook their parents, in order to save themselves. In a great fire if an obstinate father will not go out of his house, shall the son be lost with him, or shall he quit his father to save his own life? And if among the Hindus, some learn the terrors of hell and through Christ wish to get free from them, shall they lose their eternal salvation because their friends prefer caste, bráhmañhood and idolatry, to the glories of heaven?

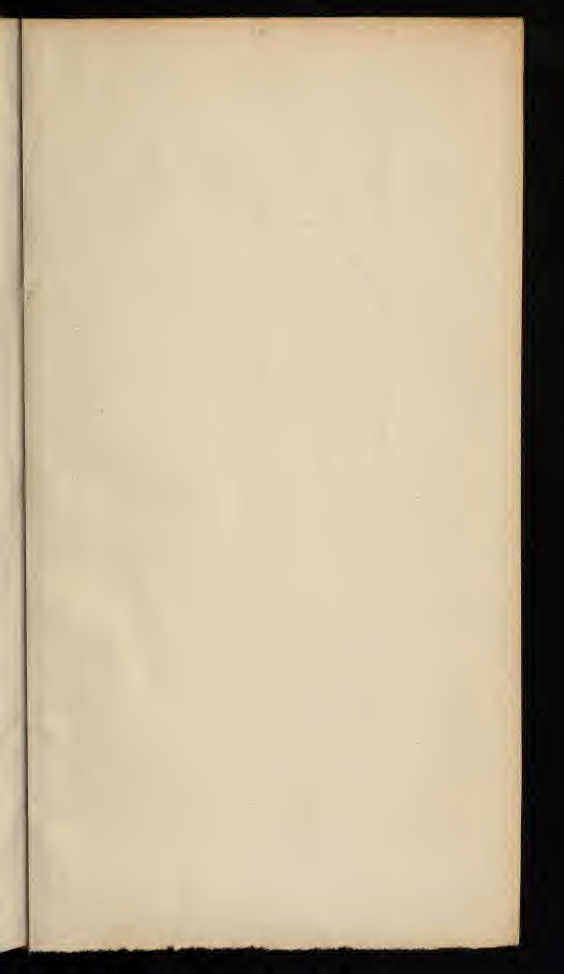
No. The ruin of the parent will not help the son in the sight of God. Each soul must answer for its own guilt; must bear its own burden of punishment; and must, if it will, seek its own salvation. In another world, no substitution is allowed, and all relationships cease. Parents will be judged for their own acts and children for theirs. No law, no custom among men; no majority on the side of evil: no popularity of evil can defend or palliate the guilt of a single soul. No command of a father will be allowed to set aside a positive command of God himself or the conditions upon which salvation is received. "HE THAT LOVETH FATHER

OR MOTHER MORE THAN ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME." Truth must be followed, duty must be obeyed at all risks, because the Saviour says it. "Whoso confesseth me before men, HIM will I confess before the face of my Father who is in heaven : and whoso denieth me before men, HIM will I DENY before the face of my Father who is in heaven." What an awful end ! To be DENIED by Christ !

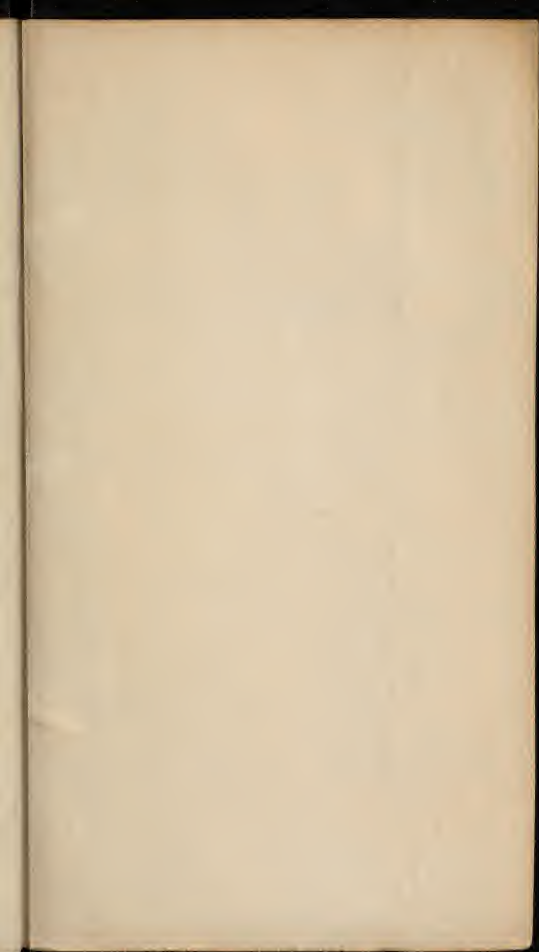
There is nothing left, but to believe in Christ and to profess our faith before all men. Who will be a *loser* thereby ? No man ever did so and lost yet. His property may be taken by designing friends ; he may be cast out from home ; his wife may be refused to him. But he will have done his appointed task ; will have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men, and will receive the approval of the King of kings. More than this, while his life will be happy, his crown of glory will be secure for ever. "There is no man who hath left father and mother, and brethren and wife, and sisters, and houses and lands for my sake and the Gospel's ; but he shall receive a HUNDRED FOLD more in the present time and in the world to come everlasting life." My reader, say thou with the apostle Paul, "I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST."

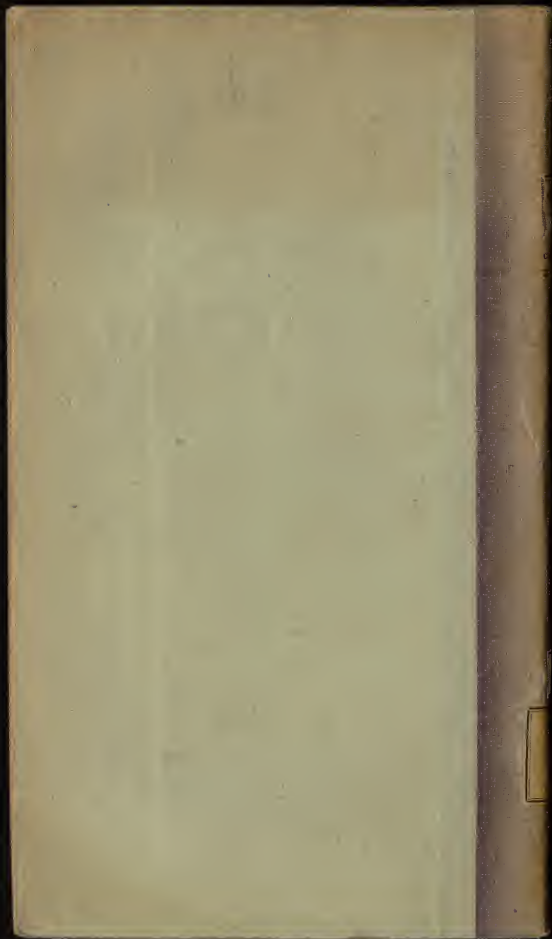
"Ashamed of Jesus ! yes I may,
When I've no crimes to wash away !
No tears to wipe, no joys to crave ;
And no immortal soul to save.
Till then, nor be my boasting vain ;
Till then I'll boast a Saviour slain :
And oh ! may this my portion be,
That Saviour's not ashamed of me."





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VEDANTISM, BRAHMISM,

AND

CHRISTIANITY

EXAMINED AND COMPARED.

A PRIZE ESSAY.

BY THE

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MISSIONARY OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.



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